



# The Origins of Overthrow

Hegemonic Expectations, Emotional Frustration,  
and the Impulse to Regime Change

Payam Ghalehdar

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to  
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences  
of the European University Institute

Florence, 20 March 2015



European University Institute  
**Department of Political and Social Sciences**

## The Origins of Overthrow

Hegemonic Expectations, Emotional Frustration, and the Impulse to  
Regime Change

Payam Ghalehdar

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to  
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences  
of the European University Institute

### **Examining Board**

Prof. Christian Reus-Smit, University of Queensland (supervisor)  
Prof. Jennifer Welsh, European University Institute  
Prof. Roland Bleiker, University of Queensland  
Prof. Michael Cox, London School of Economics

© Payam Ghalehdar, 2015

No part of this thesis may be copied, reproduced or transmitted without prior  
permission of the author



## Acknowledgments

I remember quite vividly how I was glued to the TV on February 5, 2003, when Colin Powell, George W. Bush's first Secretary of State, presented the US case for regime change in Iraq in his much-anticipated speech to the United Nations Security Council. Owing to its significance, the meeting was broadcast live on German TV, a fate not shared by many other UNSC meetings. It was that time, when I was, like many others, closely following the unfolding events eventually leading to the invasion of Iraq a month later, that stoked my interest in a topic that I have remained fascinated by ever since, and embarked on researching in 2010 when I decided to do a PhD; a decision I have hardly ever regretted.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my supervisor, Christian Reus-Smit, without whom my interest in regime change would have remained as raw and diffuse as it was when I entered the EUI in September 2010. I am grateful for his decision to supervise me and to continue to do so even after his departure from the EUI in 2013. It was him who gave me enough creative space to develop my own ideas and arguments, never imposing his own analytical framework or theoretical lens and always encouraging me to think big. It was him who allowed me to benefit from his vast experience in producing sound and convincing research. It was him who from across continents made me meet deadlines I would surely not have failed to miss. In short, it was him who showed me how to write a dissertation, guiding me through each and every step from the research question to the obligatory cover letter attached to the final version of the thesis. Whatever flawed result I offer in the following pages would not even have been half as good without his guidance and mentorship.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the members of my thesis committee: Jennifer Welsh, Roland Bleiker, and Michael Cox. They provided incisive and constructive feedback on my final draft, feedback I hope to be able to do justice to in future revisions. I should add that I appreciate Jennifer's kind and useful assistance with regard to career prospects, and I will not forget Roland's simple, but eye-opening piece of advice he shared with me in March 2014 on what it takes to be a successful academic. We will see how much of it I really understood.

Beyond my thesis committee, I would like to thank Pascal Vennesson and Adrienne Héritier for being the first EUI faculty members guiding me through the PhD program in the initial weeks. I also owe thanks to Olivier Roy who proved very helpful in preparing my research

visit to Washington, DC. Finally, I am grateful to Daniel Deudney, Walter Carlsnaes, and Stefan Seidendorf for having introduced me to international relations during my years as an undergraduate, to Klaus Schönhoven for having ignited my interest in international history, and to Berthold Rittberger for having taught me how to do research. Much of the interest I have had in regime change and military intervention was triggered by John M. Owen's book called *Clash of Ideas in World Politics*, for which I would like to give him credit.

The European University Institute is a unique institution and I could not have possibly known how lucky I was when I was admitted to its PhD program in 2010. Apart from the regular ways in which the quality of graduate schools is typically measured, there are other indicators testifying to the immeasurable value of the EUI. What makes it truly special is its negation of conventions, for better or worse. Not belonging to any one specific national tradition, research-related or otherwise, there is no better place for creative and innovative thinking than the EUI. In the words of my friend Bosko, "the most wonderful thing about the EUI is that it actually doesn't belong to anyone", as "the institution [the EUI] is what we make of it".<sup>1</sup> Thanks to the generous scholarship of the DAAD, the German grant authority, I have been lucky enough to benefit from this community in many different ways, and to grow not only as a graduate student, but also as a person. I owe special thanks to my closest friends Bosko and Milena Tripkovic, Alexis Galan, Kristian Voss, Trajche Panov, and Andrea Warnecke, who, wittingly or unwittingly, taught me to become a better version of myself, and were there for me when I needed their advice, reassurance, or company. Our regular lunch meetings that more often than not led to heated discussions about random subjects, will stick in my mind for some time to come. I must thank Moritz Deutschmann, Rana Sajedi, Noelle Richardson, Nicole Jenne, Ewan Mellor, Kasia Granat, Maciej Borowicz, Sarah Auster, Kivanc Atak, Alejandro Garcia, Oliver Westerwinter, Kevin Köhler, David Kleimann, Barbara Badell Sanchez, Markos Vogiatzoglou, Argyri Panezi, Nisida Gjoksi, Jurek Dudek, and Guilherme Sampaio for providing much-appreciated distraction from my thesis, as well as Maja Spanu, Maria Birnbaum, and Patrick Herron for the meetings we had to discuss our work and for giving me the feeling that we were going through the different stages of our dissertations collectively. Last but not least, I am grateful for having been a member of the EUI rowing club. Writing a doctoral thesis requires a lot of discipline. Waking up early in the

---

<sup>1</sup> "Welcome to the European University Institute!", [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9N\\_5pVINsc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X9N_5pVINsc) (watch from minute 3:02), accessed on February 20, 2015.

morning for an outing on the quiet Arno was not only one of the best ways to start the day, but also a constant reminder that life is beautiful when body, mind, and soul are in balance.

This thesis equally benefited from two research stays away from the EUI: one at the George Washington University in Washington, DC and one at the University of Queensland in Brisbane. At GWU, I was fortunate enough to spend the third year of my doctoral research as a visiting scholar at the Elliott School's Institute for Security and Conflict Studies, one of the most vibrant places in the field of international relations and security studies. There, I was given the opportunity to present parts of my work in the institute's weekly workshop and to receive incisive comments. I would like to thank all participants of the workshop, especially Charles Glaser, the institute's director, as well as Henry Nau, Alexander Downes, Stephen Biddle, Martha Finnemore, Elizabeth Saunders, Michael Barnett, Harris Mylonas, and Lindsey O'Rourke, who were all kind enough to provide advice and comments in one-on-one meetings. At the University of Queensland, I was a visiting PhD researcher at the School of Political Science & International Studies from February to April 2014, where I presented the first draft of my theory chapter in the History and Theory Reading Group. I would like to express my gratitude to the reading group's participants for their insightful comments, and to Emma Hutchison for her useful advice on how to grasp emotion both empirically and conceptually. A special 'thank you' goes out to Lorenzo Cello, Nico Taylor, Linda Mantovani, Emily Tannock, Bronwyn Crook, Nienke van der Have, Meru Sheel, and Dyonne Pennings for helping me get my work-life balance right.

Many people contributed to this thesis without being in the spotlight. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Maureen Lechleitner and Gabriella Unger for their administrative assistance and for putting up with my occasional sloppiness. I owe many thanks to the EUI library staff, especially to Ruth Gbikpi and Jiri Vankat, for their excellent service and good-morning smiles, and the library staff at the Library of Congress, the National Security Archive, and the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library.

In the most fundamental sense, this thesis would not have been possible without my parents and my sister, without their unconditional love and never-ending support. I thank my sister for being the backbone of my moral and intellectual rectitude and my parents for instilling in me the intellectual curiosity that guided this project. More importantly, I am forever indebted to them for giving me and my sister the opportunity to realize our hopes and dreams, sparing us from the heavy burden of the sense of displacement they themselves have had to bear ever

since their hopes and dreams turned into a bitter nightmare. In terms of perseverance, integrity, and steadfastness, they are my ultimate role models. I wish I could make them half as proud as I am of them.



## **Abstract**

Why has regime change, defined as military intervention aimed at forcibly transforming a target state's domestic political authority structure, been a long-standing practice in US foreign policy, used roughly two dozen times since 1900 despite its limited success in producing peace, stability and/or democracy? Extant theories fail to provide sound answers. Realist approaches, for example, under-predict the recurrence of regime change if great powers should have no reason to intervene in weaker states, or over-predict it if anything goes under anarchy. Similarly, democracy promotion arguments overstate the causal importance of the US desire to expand liberty globally.

This dissertation presents a novel explanation for the recurrence of regime change in US foreign policy, arguing that the practice of regime change is predicated upon what I call 'emotional frustration', an anger-arousing emotional state that is brought about by a foreign leader's obstructive behavior perceived to be rooted in implacable hatred. While obstruction is ubiquitous in interstate interactions, I claim that the combination of hegemonic expectations towards a target state and the perception of hatred shape the extent to which a foreign leader's conduct evokes an emotional response on the part of foreign policy elites. Once emotionally frustrated, regime change becomes an attractive foreign policy instrument to decision-makers who seek a way to confront and put a stop to the obstruction of a menacing target state. It enables frustrated leaders both to permanently get rid of a perceivedly hostile foreign leader and to discharge their frustration through the use of force.

Illustrating the importance of emotional frustration, I conduct four historical case studies based on primary sources, spanning almost one hundred years of US history. Regime changes in Cuba (1906), Nicaragua (1909–12), the Dominican Republic (1965), and Iraq (2003) reveal overlooked patterns of emotional frustration that have time and again animated regime change decisions.



# Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
THE ENIGMA OF REGIME CHANGE.....	3
THE SHORTCOMINGS OF CONVENTIONAL EXPLANATIONS.....	6
<i>Democracy Promotion</i> .....	6
<i>Unipolarity and the Structural Roots of Regime Change</i> .....	7
THE ARGUMENT – HEGEMONIC EXPECTATIONS, PERCEPTIONS OF HATRED, AND EMOTIONAL FRUSTRATION...	9
METHOD AND CASE SELECTION .....	11
SOURCE MATERIAL .....	14
PLAN OF THE STUDY .....	16
<b>CHAPTER ONE –THE RECURRENCE OF REGIME CHANGE AND THE STATE OF THE ART....</b>	<b>19</b>
THE RECURRENCE OF REGIME CHANGE .....	19
<i>What is Regime Change?</i> .....	19
<i>The Conceptual Attributes of Regime Change</i> .....	21
<i>The Comparability of Regime Change Cases</i> .....	25
<i>Recurrent, But Not Routinized</i> .....	28
EXISTING EXPLANATIONS FOR THE RECURRENCE OF REGIME CHANGE .....	31
<i>Literature on Foreign-Imposed Regime Change</i> .....	31
<i>Structural Explanations</i> .....	34
<i>Democracy Promotion</i> .....	37
<i>Rationalist Theories of War</i> .....	39
CONCLUSION .....	41
<b>CHAPTER TWO – THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL FRUSTRATION IN REGIME CHANGE .....</b>	<b>43</b>
EXPLAINING US-IMPOSED REGIME CHANGE – THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL FRUSTRATION .....	45
<i>Emotions in IR</i> .....	46
<i>What is Emotion?</i> .....	48
<i>Conceptualizing Emotional Frustration</i> .....	53
<i>Hegemonic Expectations</i> .....	56
<i>Perceptions of Obstruction</i> .....	60
<i>Emotional Frustration and Regime Change</i> .....	63
<i>Operationalizing Frustration</i> .....	65
CONCLUSION .....	69
<b>CHAPTER THREE – THE 1906 INTERVENTION IN CUBA .....</b>	<b>71</b>
THE OUTCOME - REGIME CHANGE IN CUBA .....	73
THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT .....	75
EMOTIONAL FRUSTRATION AND REGIME CHANGE .....	78
<i>Roosevelt's Hegemonic Expectations Towards Cuba</i> .....	78
<i>Cuban Obstruction</i> .....	82
<i>Roosevelt's Perception of Cuban Obstruction</i> .....	84
<i>Roosevelt's Emotional Frustration</i> .....	87
ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS FOR REGIME CHANGE IN CUBA .....	89
CONCLUSION .....	93
<b>CHAPTER FOUR – THE 1909 – 1912 INTERVENTION IN NICARAGUA .....</b>	<b>95</b>
THE OUTCOME: A SERIES OF INTERVENTIONS.....	97
EMOTIONAL FRUSTRATION AND REGIME CHANGE .....	103
<i>Taft's Hegemonic Expectations Towards Nicaragua</i> .....	103
<i>Nicaraguan Obstruction</i> .....	106
<i>US Perception of Nicaraguan Obstruction</i> .....	109
<i>Taft's Emotional Frustration</i> .....	111
ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS FOR REGIME CHANGE IN NICARAGUA.....	113
CONCLUSION .....	119

<b>CHAPTER FIVE – THE 1965 DOMINICAN INTERVENTION .....</b>	<b>121</b>
THE CONSTITUTIONALIST UPRISING .....	123
JOHNSON DECIDES TO INTERVENE.....	126
EMOTIONAL FRUSTRATION AND REGIME CHANGE .....	130
<i>US Hegemonic Expectations Towards the Dominican Republic.....</i>	<i>130</i>
<i>Dominican Obstruction.....</i>	<i>135</i>
<i>US Perceptions of Dominican Obstruction.....</i>	<i>138</i>
<i>Johnson's Emotional Frustration with Bosch .....</i>	<i>142</i>
ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS .....	146
CONCLUSION .....	153
<b>CHAPTER SIX – THE 2003 INVASION OF IRAQ.....</b>	<b>155</b>
THE PRELUDE: US POLICY TOWARDS IRAQ BEFORE GEORGE W. BUSH'S PRESIDENCY .....	157
US POLICY TOWARDS IRAQ UNDER GEORGE W. BUSH .....	161
<i>Containment Before 9/11 .....</i>	<i>161</i>
<i>The Turn to Regime Change After 9/11 .....</i>	<i>163</i>
BUSH'S EMOTIONAL FRUSTRATION AND US REGIME CHANGE IN IRAQ.....	165
<i>Bush's Expectations Towards Iraq Before 9/11 .....</i>	<i>165</i>
<i>Iraqi Obstruction Before 9/11.....</i>	<i>167</i>
<i>The Bush Administration's Perception of Iraqi Obstruction Before 9/11 .....</i>	<i>168</i>
<i>No Regime Change.....</i>	<i>169</i>
<i>Bush's Hegemonic Expectations Towards Iraq After 9/11.....</i>	<i>170</i>
<i>Iraqi Obstruction After 9/11.....</i>	<i>171</i>
<i>The Bush Administration's Perception of Iraqi Obstruction After 9/11 .....</i>	<i>172</i>
<i>Bush's Emotional Frustration with Saddam Hussein.....</i>	<i>175</i>
ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS .....	178
CONCLUSION .....	184
<b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>185</b>
WORDS, DEEDS, AND THE NAIVETÉ OF REALISM.....	188
US GRAND STRATEGY AND THE CONSEQUENCE OF HEGEMONIC EXPECTATIONS .....	190
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF REGIME CHANGE .....	192
PERCEIVED INTENTIONS .....	193
A FINAL NOTE ON THE POWERFUL .....	195
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>197</b>

# INTRODUCTION

In a much-televised manifestation of the strikingly quick disintegration and defeat of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime in Iraq, US military forces ripped down a statue of the Iraqi dictator from its base in Baghdad's Firdos Square on April 9, 2003.<sup>1</sup> Only three weeks earlier, on March 19, US President George W. Bush had ordered the invasion of Iraq with 183,000 coalition troops.<sup>2</sup> The toppling of the statue not only symbolized the abrupt end of the dictator's rule over Iraq, it also came as a potent image for the foreign policy of regime change, prompting some to call the invasion the "Mother of All Regime Changes".<sup>3</sup> But as defining as the overthrow of Saddam Hussein was for the practice of regime change – the very term regime change first emerged in connection with US policy towards Iraq in the 1990s –<sup>4</sup> Iraq is merely a recent case added to a long list of similar cases. Indeed, regime change, which is defined here as military intervention aimed at forcibly transforming a target state's domestic political authority structure, figures prominently in the history of both US foreign policy and international politics. Contrary to the view that the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq was a radical aberration stemming from overwhelming neoconservative influence on the Bush administration's foreign policy,<sup>5</sup> regime change is a time-honored tool of statecraft with a long-standing tradition: a brief glance at the historical record shows that the United States alone accounts for twenty-five cases of regime change that span more than a hundred years of modern American history from 1899 until today.<sup>6</sup> At the same time, however, regime change is a proscribed tool of foreign policy with no standing in international law, which stands as a formidable hurdle to its use, making regime change anything but a routinized foreign policy practice. Therefore, the much-discussed 2003 invasion of Iraq begs a broader and more fundamental question: if not habitual, why has regime change been a recurrently

---

<sup>1</sup> "The Fall of Baghdad", *New York Times*, April 10, 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Bob Woodward, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 379, 401.

<sup>3</sup> W. Michael Reisman, "The Manley O. Hudson Lecture: Why Regime Change Is (Almost Always) a Bad Idea," *American Journal of International Law* 98, no. 3 (2004): 519.

<sup>4</sup> According to Robert Litwak, "[r]egime change' entered the U.S. foreign policy lexicon in connection with Iraq in the late 1990s and was popularized by the Bush administration in the months preceding the 2003 war to oust Saddam Hussein". See Robert S. Litwak, *Regime Change: U.S. Strategy Through the Prism of 9/11* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2007), xiii.

<sup>5</sup> See for example Stefan A. Halper and Jonathan Clarke, *America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 139. For a dissenting, yet affirmative view, see Robert Kagan, "Neocon Nation - Neoconservatism, c. 1776," *World Affairs* 170, no. 4 (2008).

<sup>6</sup> John M. Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 22. By another count, the United States has engaged in twenty-two regime change operations since 1900. See David A. Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 115-116. In total, Owen counts 209 cases of regime change in international history from 1510 to 2010, Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 2.

used practice in US foreign policy over more than the past one hundred years? Taking up this question head-on, this project is an inquiry into the recurrence of regime change in US foreign policy.

The question of why regime has repeatedly been used in US foreign policy is relevant both in terms of theory and policy: first, regime change is a highly consequential and disruptive foreign policy practice. In Iraq, more than a decade has passed since the 2003 invasion. Saddam Hussein was executed and relegated to the dustbin of history in December 2006; the United States withdrew all its troops from Iraq in December 2011. Post-invasion Iraq, however, rarely fails to remind us of the repercussions of regime change. Stability and democracy, whether actually sought after by the invaders or not, have remained remote ideals rather than becoming tangible results.<sup>7</sup> Iraq is not exceptional. Akin to revolutions, i.e. moments when "one state structure dissolves and a new one arises in its place",<sup>8</sup> regime change generally causes a massive disruption in the most fundamental authority structures of target states and is, through the effects on a state's infrastructural power and institutions, "the most shattering domestic political event a country can experience".<sup>9</sup> This is, as Alexander Downes correctly notes, why "it is important to understand the origins of FIRC [foreign-imposed regime change] because it sometimes entails disastrous consequences".<sup>10</sup>

Second, the practice of regime change deserves attention because, as an instrument of foreign policy, it is far from being obsolete. Influential US policymakers regularly invoke ideas about regime change when it comes to dealing with perceived enemies. While former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates pointedly urged avoiding Iraqi-style invasions in a speech addressing the future of the US Army in February 2011,<sup>11</sup> at least two candidates running in the 2012 Republican presidential primaries, Mitt Romney and Newt Gingrich, demanded a reinvigorated foreign policy, pushing for regime change in countries like North Korea and

---

<sup>7</sup> With a score of six for civil liberties and five for political rights, Iraq is still rated as 'not free' by Freedom House's 2012 *Freedom in the World* report. In terms of political stability, "ongoing sectarian, terrorist, and political violence targeted government forces" still in 2011, and "terrorist attacks continue to be directed toward sectarian targets". See Freedom House, *Freedom in the World: Iraq* (2012 [cited November 20, 2012]); available from <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2012/iraq#.U1SHBleKJBk>.

<sup>8</sup> Stephen M. Walt, *Revolution and War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), vii.

<sup>9</sup> Goran Peic and Dan Reiter, "Foreign-Imposed Regime Change, State Power and Civil War Onset, 1920-2004," *British Journal of Political Science* 41, no. 3 (2011): 453. From the regime changer's perspective, "[f]ew national undertakings are as complex, costly, and time consuming as reconstructing the governing institutions of foreign societies" after regime change. See Minxin Pei and Sara Kasper, "Lessons from the Past: The American Record on Nation Building," (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003), 1.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander B. Downes, "The Causes of Foreign-Imposed Regime Change in Interstate Wars," in *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association* (2008), 4.

<sup>11</sup> Speech delivered by Robert M. Gates at the United States Military Academy, West Point, NY, February 25, 2011 (<http://www.defense.gov/speeches/speech.aspx?speechid=1539>, accessed on November 20, 2012).

Iran.<sup>12</sup> More generally, Robert Kagan, contrasting the contemporary era of US foreign policy with the isolationist inter-war years,<sup>13</sup> reminds us that current intervention fatigue among US foreign policymakers and the US public might not be a lasting sentiment, making regime change anything but outdated as a foreign policy instrument.

Third, regime change is a practice worth investigating because it has broad implications for a number of fundamental debates within the discipline of international relations. First, it raises important questions with respect to the reasons why states resort to the use of force, perhaps the most essential research agenda in international relations, and state behavior more generally speaking. While distinctly different from other types of used force,<sup>14</sup> studying regime change can provide insights into the causes of interstate violence. Second, the practice of regime change, being notorious for its violation of state sovereignty, tells us something about the mutual recognition of sovereignty and the extent to which states are willing to respect this basic principle in international society. Indeed, repeated and consistent violations of what Hedley Bull calls "basic rules of coexistence in international society" might have implications for how we perceive the constitutive structure of international politics.<sup>15</sup> It is these implications that make regime change a relevant subject worth studying.

### **The Enigma of Regime Change**

A brief look at the history of US foreign policy in the past one hundred years shows that regime change has been a recurrent, yet non-habitual tool of statecraft. On the one hand, no other country has engaged in regime change operations more frequently during the twentieth century than the United States, the single most prolific regime changer in the world. Having conducted twenty-five regime changes in various target states between 1899 and 2003,<sup>16</sup> US regime change occurs roughly once every four years on average. What is more, the pattern of

---

<sup>12</sup> "The Race to the Right", *New York Times*, December 24, 2011. "Gingrich's Foreign Policy Words Summon the Cold War, but Enemy Is Iran", *New York Times*, December 15, 2011.

<sup>13</sup> Robert Kagan, "Superpowers Don't Get to Retire," *New Republic*, May 26 2014.

<sup>14</sup> As Bruce Jentleson and Ariel Levite show, regime change, or what they call "foreign military intervention", differs from the concept of war along the dimensions of domain, objective, and strategy. See Bruce W. Jentleson and Ariel E. Levite, "The Analysis of Protracted Foreign Military Intervention," in *Foreign Military Intervention: The Dynamics of Protracted Conflict*, ed. Ariel E. Levite, Bruce W. Jentleson, and Larry Berman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 5-8.

<sup>15</sup> As Hedley Bull argues, "[a]t the heart of [the rules of coexistence] is the principle that each state accepts the duty to respect the sovereignty or supreme jurisdiction of every other state over its own citizens and domain, in return for the right to expect similar respect for its own sovereignty from other states". See Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 3rd ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002 [1977]), 67.

<sup>16</sup> Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 18-22.

US regime change covers times of multipolarity, bipolarity, and unipolarity in the international system – the pre-World War I era, the Cold War, and the post-Cold War era – and extends to many different regions of the world – the Western hemisphere,<sup>17</sup> Europe, the Middle East, East Asia, and Southeast Asia.<sup>18</sup> Put differently, US regime change has a long tradition, constituting to a recurrent pattern in US foreign policy. On the other hand, however, regime change remains an extraordinary foreign policy practice. As much as it occupies a prominent place in the toolbox of US foreign policy, its use is far from habitual. Unlike other practices like diplomacy or even war, regime change is not routinized or what John Owen calls "a normal tool of statecraft",<sup>19</sup> as it has no established place in the normative structure of international life. Thus, regime change is not a routinized tool of foreign policy. The simultaneity of its recurrence and non-habitual nature make it a puzzling phenomenon in international relations.

The pattern of recurrent US regime change activity over more than the past hundred years is equally puzzling from a consequentialist perspective: while being highly consequential, regime change has ramifications rarely congruent with what the literature generally assumes are the regime changer's intentions. That stability, peace, and democracy have been out of reach in post-invasion Iraq, as described above, is no isolated incident. According to the literature on the effects of foreign-imposed regime change (FIRC), FIRCs are generally detrimental to the internal stability of target states and rarely successful in advancing democracy. Goran Peic and Dan Reiter, for example, find that "FIRCs make civil wars more likely because they wreck state infrastructural power or change political institutions".<sup>20</sup> With respect to the likelihood of successful democratization through FIRC, Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George Downs show that "intervention does little to promote democracy and often leads to its erosion".<sup>21</sup> Notwithstanding the finding that countries that have experienced intervention are more likely to democratize, James Meernik similarly maintains that "regardless of the manner in which democratic change is measured, the majority of US military interventions do not appear to lead to increased levels of

---

<sup>17</sup> Mindful of the fact that, in strictly geographical terms, the Western hemisphere refers to the half of the earth that lies west of the prime meridian, thereby including parts of Western Europe and Western Africa, I use the term interchangeably with the Americas or the New World, essentially referring to Latin American states.

<sup>18</sup> Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>20</sup> Peic and Reiter, "Foreign-Imposed Regime Change, State Power and Civil War Onset, 1920-2004," 474. "Virtually necessary conditions" for FIRC to cause civil war are interstate war and the imposition of changes in political institutions, *ibid.*, 470.

<sup>21</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George W. Downs, "Intervention and Democracy," *International Organization* 60, no. 3 (2006): 647.



democracy".<sup>22</sup> Finally, Alexander Downes and Jonathan Monten find that "democratizing efforts of the intervener are largely for naught" unless the target states is economically developed, ethnically homogenous, and has prior experience with representative government.<sup>23</sup> If these studies are right, engagement in regime change is hardly explicable. Why do states in general and the US in particular engage in regime change if its effects are unintended, undesired, and dangerous?

The central purpose of this study is to explain the US practice of regime change and to account for its recurrent, yet non-habitual pattern from the beginning of the twentieth century until today. Inquiring into the long-standing tradition of regime change in US foreign policy, the study asks why and for what purpose the United States has repeatedly used this foreign policy instrument in its dealings with the world? Admittedly, answering such question is no easy task. Referring to George W. Bush's decision to invade Iraq in 2003, Richard Haass, the State Department's Director of Policy Planning from 2001 to 2003 during Bush's first presidential term, openly admits that despite his "good if not complete understanding of how this second Iraq war came about", he "will go to [his] grave not fully understanding why".<sup>24</sup> A brief look at the extant literature on regime change, intervention, and US foreign policy shows that convincing answers are lacking not only with respect to Iraq, but with respect to the sources of US regime change more generally. There is a striking gap between the relevance of the question and what we know about how and why regime change comes about. Stephen Krasner calls this gap between relevance and accumulated knowledge about regime change, or what he calls state practices "designed to alter the domestic authority structures of other states", a lacuna that for international relations scholarship is "particularly troubling or perhaps, just weird".<sup>25</sup> By providing an answer based on qualitative historical research, this study will try to fill this gap, making an explanatory contribution to our understanding of regime change as a recurrent, yet non-habitual feature of US foreign policy.

---

<sup>22</sup> James Meernik, "United States Military Intervention and the Promotion of Democracy," *Journal of Peace Research* 33, no. 4 (1996): 400.

<sup>23</sup> Alexander B. Downes and Jonathan Monten, "Forced to Be Free?: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization," *International Security* 37, no. 4 (2013): 94.

<sup>24</sup> Richard N. Haass, *War of Necessity, War of Choice: A Memoir of Two Iraq Wars* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009), 234.

<sup>25</sup> Stephen D. Krasner, "Changing State Structures: Outside In," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 108, no. 4 (2011): 21302.

## The Shortcomings of Conventional Explanations

Existing literature has either paid surprisingly little systematic attention to the reasons and sources of regime change, or is limited in its contribution to accounting for its use.<sup>26</sup> Canvassing and critically reviewing a broad range of extant explanations, Chapter One of this study will show in more detail that the single most important limitation shared by most accounts is an inhibiting over-reliance on the notion that regime change is the product of a cold and careful cost-benefit calculus. Adopting a perspective that is focused on the consequences of regime change, most explanations assume either implicitly or explicitly that regime change yields predefined benefits like democratization or the elimination of threat coveted by the regime changer. The following two sections extract arguments about the sources of regime change from broader research on democracy promotion and the consequences of unipolarity, two of the most relevant alternative accounts.

### *Democracy Promotion*

There is a vast literature on democracy promotion, especially democracy promotion and US foreign policy.<sup>27</sup> While not necessarily speaking directly to the research question dealt with here, arguments about the sources of regime change can be extracted from this literature. Focusing on democracy promotion through force as a specific type of intervention, one potential explanation for regime change is the argument that US liberalism and democracy are root causes of American interventionism. Such an argument ascribes a central role to identity for the country's foreign policy, with American national identity defined as a type of national identity that assumes the universality of the "American national experiment".<sup>28</sup> The consequence of this national identity is a foreign policy that, according to Marc Peceny, exhibits a "cultural bias in favor of democracy".<sup>29</sup> This does not mean that the American impulse to spread democracy globally cannot be in line with national security imperatives. According to Tony Smith, democracy promotion is an expression of the United States'

---

<sup>26</sup> John Owen's work on the central role of transnational ideological polarization for historical cycles of regime promotion and counter-promotion is a notable exception. Yet, Owen concedes that cases of US regime change in the early twentieth century and during the Cold War are not accounted for by his favored explanation centering on "the transnational ideological struggle among communism, fascism, and liberalism". See Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 165.

<sup>27</sup> For a good review, see Rose Gideon, "Democracy Promotion and American Foreign Policy: A Review Essay," *International Security* 25, no. 3 (2000). For a recent discussion about specific US presidencies and democracy promotion, see Michael Cox, Timothy J. Lynch, and Nicolas Bouchet, *US Foreign Policy and Democracy Promotion: From Theodore Roosevelt to Barack Obama, Routledge Studies in US Foreign Policy* (New York: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>28</sup> Gideon, "Democracy Promotion and American Foreign Policy: A Review Essay," 186.

<sup>29</sup> Mark Peceny, *Democracy at the Point of Bayonets* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999), 3.

conception of national security which assumes that "a peaceful world order in which America could fully participate needed to be one constituted by democratic states".<sup>30</sup> Concerns with the domestic order of other countries thus stems from a security concern: the impulse to spread democracy around the world is based on the belief that "the character of the domestic regimes of other states [is] hugely important for the attainment of American security and material interests".<sup>31</sup> Understood in this way, strategic behavior aimed at enhancing US influence in the world is not antithetical, but rather congruent with a foreign policy based on values in favor of spreading democracy around the world.

The historical record of US regime change contradicts the purported relationship between the practice of regime change and its democratizing purpose. While democracy promotion is perhaps the most intuitive US foreign policy preference, the US has, even after Woodrow Wilson's presidency and the alleged birth of "American liberal democratic internationalism",<sup>32</sup> deliberately and forcefully reversed attempts at domestic democratization in a number of countries. Tony Smith acknowledges that US governments have supported "authoritarian governments in places as different as Greece, Turkey, China/Taiwan and throughout Latin America", but treats these cases as a Cold War anomaly.<sup>33</sup> Democracy prevention rather than promotion, however, is more than just an anomaly: preoccupied with the containment of the Soviet Union during the Cold War, the United States was forced to "sup with the Devil in ways that made a policy of liberal ends and means impossible to pursue".<sup>34</sup> Hence, the correlation between regime change and democracy promotion is not as consistent as this argument expects.

### *Unipolarity and the Structural Roots of Regime Change*

According to some, the phenomenon of regime change and intervention more broadly is a consequence of causal factors sitting at the structural level of the state system.<sup>35</sup> Among the

---

<sup>30</sup> Tony Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 4.

<sup>31</sup> G. John Ikenberry, "America's Liberal Grand Strategy: Democracy and National Security in the Post-War Era," in *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts*, ed. Michael Cox, G. John Ikenberry, and Takashi Inoguchi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 103.

<sup>32</sup> Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century*, 30.

<sup>33</sup> Tony Smith, "From Woodrow Wilson in 1902 to the Bush Doctrine in 2002: Democracy Promotion as Imperialism," *International Politics* 48, no. 2-3 (2011): 243.

<sup>34</sup> Tony Smith, "National Security Liberalism and American Foreign Policy," in *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts*, ed. Michael Cox, G. John Ikenberry, and Takashi Inoguchi (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 94.

<sup>35</sup> For examples of third-image explanations for military intervention, see Colin Dueck, "Neoclassical Realism and the National Interest: Presidents, Domestic Politics, and Major Military Interventions," in *Neoclassical*

factors at the level of the international system, the international distribution of power, often understood in terms of material capabilities, is a prominent factor. Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth, for example, argue that unipolarity, i.e. an international system with "one extremely capable state" vis-à-vis other states,<sup>36</sup> has implications for the likelihood of intervention. As part of their general argument about how systemic constraints inhibiting the freedom of action of the most powerful state in the system are inoperative in a condition of unipolarity, the two authors argue that intervention is more likely in unipolarity than bipolarity. As the unipole does not need to "factor in the prospect of military intervention by another great power", the lack of a counterbalancing constraint provides the unipole with opportunities for intervention that a great power confronted with another great power would not have under bipolarity. Comparing the 1991 Gulf War with the 1973 oil embargo, the authors argue that the United States did not militarily intervene in the Middle East following the 1973 oil embargo because of "the potential for direct or indirect Soviet intervention" as a "significant constraint on the use of American force".<sup>37</sup> More broadly speaking, the absence of strong constraints under unipolarity makes intervention and regime change more likely.

While Brooks and Wohlforth provide an inherently consistent explanation for why the absence of constraints on US foreign policy is important for our understanding of the occurrence of intervention, the consequences of unipolarity are indeterminate to the extent to which alternative international distributions of power as material capabilities can have the same implications for intervention and regime change. Bipolarity, for instance, can be a power distribution that is just as prone to the occurrence of intervention as unipolarity, especially in the nuclear age. According to Hans Morgenthau, "the recognition on the part of the two superpowers, armed with a large arsenal of nuclear weapons, that a direct confrontation between them would entail unacceptable risks" makes them choose "to oppose and compete with each other surreptitiously through the intermediary of third parties", leading to proxy wars and intervention in weaker states.<sup>38</sup> Testifying to the indeterminacy of structural effects on the prevalence of regime change, the historical record of US regime change shows that the recurrent pattern of its employment is hardly related to the

---

*Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, ed. Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 140-141.

<sup>36</sup> Stephen G. Brooks and William C. Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 12. For a similar argument stressing the impact of power disparities on the propensity to intervene, see Oran R. Young, "Intervention and International Systems," *Journal of International Affairs* 22, no. 2 (1968): 182.

<sup>37</sup> Brooks and Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy*, 58.

<sup>38</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, "To Intervene or Not to Intervene," *Foreign Affairs* 45 (1966): 428.

international power distribution, given that the United States has engaged in this practice under multipolarity, for example in Cuba in 1906 and in Nicaragua between 1909 and 1912, bipolarity, for example in the Dominican Republic in 1965, and unipolarity, for example in Iraq in 2003.

### **The Argument – Hegemonic Expectations, Perceptions of Hatred, and Emotional Frustration**

I argue that the assumption of rationality found in many extant explanations is misleading, blinding us to the actual nature of the decision-making process that results in regime change. Rather than taking a cost-benefit calculus for granted, we cannot understand engagement in regime change unless we analyze the decision-making process in the run-up to regime change operations head-on. According to the argument presented here, regime change is a foreign policy that displays aggression. More often than not, the ambitions pursued with it are offensive, not defensive. Regime change is a "war of choice", i.e. a war that does "not involve obvious self-defense",<sup>39</sup> not a "war of necessity" marked by the "requirement to respond to the use of military force by an aggressor and the fact that no option other than military force exists to reverse what has been done".<sup>40</sup> But what is the choice of aggression in regime change based on? As mentioned above, international relations scholarship typically treats aggressive behavior as the product of a careful cost-benefit calculus. "Calculated aggression", a type of aggression that involves weighing "costs and risks of offense against the likely benefits" rather than charging "headlong into losing wars or Pyrrhic victories",<sup>41</sup> is most commonly assumed to be at play in foreign policy decision-making. Yet, I claim that this type of aggression must be contrasted with aggression triggered by emotions. In order to account for US regime change behavior, the central claim of this study is that regime change is a type of 'affective' aggression triggered by what I call 'emotional frustration'.

The argument about how emotional frustration can lead to the aggressive foreign policy of regime change centers on foreign policy decision makers, i.e. state leaders, their foreign policy aides, and other statesmen involved in the articulation and execution of a country's foreign policy, and their experience of frustration. Taken as a starting point, frustration is ubiquitous in international politics. In their dealings with other states, state leaders' plans and desires are rarely fully realized, which means that their expectations are

---

<sup>39</sup> Richard N. Haass, "Wars of Choice," *Washington Post*, November 23 2003.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), 37.

oftentimes obstructed. But not every frustration triggers an emotional response. To distinguish between different types of reactions to frustration, constituted by expectations and the obstruction thereof, I define emotional frustration, a sub-type of frustration, as an anger-arousing emotional state provoked by an obstruction of prior expectations that is perceived to be rooted in intolerable hatred. Thus, in order to understand what evokes an aggressive response to frustration on the part of foreign policymakers, we need to turn to expectations and perceptions of obstruction. Prior expectations towards the behavior of a target state are important, because behavior becomes obstructive only in light of expectations. I argue that especially hegemonic expectations, which I define as anticipations that a target state will comply with the wishes of foreign policymakers even if these wishes undermine the autonomous decision-making capabilities of the target state, enhance the frustration potential of foreign policymakers by raising the probability that target state actions will be regarded as obstructive.

Hegemonic expectations by themselves, however, are not enough to bring about emotional frustration. I argue that to understand emotional frustration, we must additionally assess how foreign policymakers perceive a given obstruction by a target state. If obstruction is perceived to be a routine matter, a fact of life in international politics, or attributable to external constraints and requirements, there is a low likelihood that frustration will arouse an emotional response.<sup>42</sup> If, however, obstruction is perceived to be emanating from deep and intolerable hatred for the frustrated, it constitutes emotional frustration and is more likely to lead to aggression.<sup>43</sup> Attributions with regard to the causes of an obstruction and perceptions of intentionality are thus critical to how frustration becomes emotional. In combination with hegemonic expectations, the perception of foreign policymakers that an obstruction is rooted in hatred and irredeemable hostility, plays an important role in evoking an emotional response to frustration.

While regime change can certainly not be reduced to emotions, I argue that it would be difficult to explain regime change without reference to the emotional frustration of foreign policymakers. Once emotionally frustrated with a target state, foreign policymakers have a high chance of considering regime change an attractive option to put a stop to the obstruction of a menacing target state. Regime change helps leaders not only to get rid of a foreign leader

---

<sup>42</sup> James A. Kulik and Roger Brown, "Frustration, Attribution of Blame, and Aggression," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 15, no. 2 (1979).

<sup>43</sup> Mark Schafer and his coauthors call this belief in the culpability of others "attributional interpretation[s] of the environment" that presuppose "hostility in the external environment". Mark Schafer, Sam Robison, and Bradley Aldrich, "Operational Codes and the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland: A Test of the Frustration–Aggression Hypothesis," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 2, no. 1 (2006): 69-70.

perceived to be full of intolerable hatred, but also to discharge frustration through the use of force. Understood this way, the practice of regime change need not be a product of a rational weighing of costs and benefits, nor a tool whose essential purpose is to confront national security threats or to spread democracy. Instead, it is best understood as a foreign policy practice predicated upon emotional frustration.

## Method and Case Selection

To illustrate how central hegemonic expectations, perceptions of obstruction as a sign of deep hatred, and emotional frustration are for regime change decisions, I conduct a qualitative historical analysis of four US regime change cases. While I use cross-case comparisons to evaluate alternative explanations, my principle source of analytical leverage comes from the within-case analysis of historical cases, a methodological tradition with different names, yet most commonly referred to as "process tracing".<sup>44</sup> With respect to the selection of cases, I examine four US intervention decisions: the 1906 intervention in Cuba, the 1909 intervention in Nicaragua, the 1965 Dominican intervention, and the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Why these cases? Evidently, unless one studies "all cases in the population [...], one faces the pertinent challenge of case selection".<sup>45</sup> Since random selection, an otherwise powerful approach to case selection, is not an appropriate selection procedure for qualitative research,<sup>46</sup> intentional, non-random case selection, with all its pitfalls and vulnerability to inherent selection bias,<sup>47</sup> is the norm and only alternative that qualitative researchers have. On the basis of established case selection criteria in the literature on case study methodology,<sup>48</sup> my rationale for selecting the above-mentioned four regime change decisions is as follows: first, I solely focus on US

---

<sup>44</sup> For the perhaps earliest definition of process tracing, see Alexander L. George, "The Causal Nexus Between Cognitive Beliefs and Decision-Making Behavior: The 'Operational Code' Belief System," in *Psychological Models in International Politics*, ed. Lawrence S. Falkowski (Boulder: Westview Press, 1979), 113-114.

<sup>45</sup> Ingo Rohlfing, *Case Studies and Causal Inference: An Integrative Framework* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 61.

<sup>46</sup> For an argument about how random case selection in small-n research "will often cause very serious biases", see Gary King, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 126. See also Jack S. Levy, "Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25, no. 1 (2008): 8.

<sup>47</sup> Selection bias is defined as "occurring when some form of selection process in either the design of the study or the real-world phenomena under investigation results in inferences that suffer from systematic error", see David Collier and James Mahoney, "Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research," *World Politics* 49, no. 1 (1996): 59. One prominent example of selection is what is called confirmation bias, i.e. the selection of cases that we know will support our favored argument, see King, Keohane, and Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, 129.

<sup>48</sup> For best practices and a broad discussion of case selection, see Andrew Bennett and Colin Elman, "Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods," *Annual Review of Political Science* 9, no. 1 (2006): 460-463, John Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), Ch. 5, Levy, "Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference.", Rohlfing, *Case Studies and Causal Inference: An Integrative Framework*, Ch. 3.

instances of regime change. As already mentioned above, the United States is the most prolific regime changer in recent international history and hence, in empirical terms, the most important and intriguing state to study. True, one could argue that the narrative presented here might be a product of unique American circumstances, less relevant to illuminating other states' patterns of engagement in regime change, and therefore not generalizable or applicable to an international set of regime changers. Mindful of the relevance of these potential charges, I argue that on the basis of my argument that emotional frustration must be taken into account to understand regime change decisions, US engagement in regime change is a least-likely case,<sup>49</sup> at least from the perspective of the commonly held assumption that especially Western decision-makers are particularly unlikely to be prone to emotional decision-making.<sup>50</sup> This assumption, however questionable, has been implicitly held both in a wide range of scholarly work and the realm of policymaking, predominantly historically, but also up to more recent times, and is best expressed in Henry Kissinger's description of the developing world where foreign policy is not defined "according to clear, objective rational interests but rather by opaque, internal, and irrational cultural desires and emotions."<sup>51</sup> Showing that emotional frustration indeed plays an important role in US regime change decisions should do away with such assumptions and thereby bolster our confidence in the general relevance of emotions in regime change decisions.<sup>52</sup>

Second, among US cases of regime change, I choose four historical cases that span the entire period of US regime change activity from the beginning of the twentieth century until today, covering different periods in the history of US foreign policy and thus allowing for variation in the structure of the international system, regime types promoted, and the international normative context, i.e. factors that might be considered playing a role in the occurrence of regime change. This case selection rationale, choosing four positive cases and allowing for variation in a number of potentially important factors, brings leverage to the

---

<sup>49</sup> A least-likely case, also called hard case, is a case that, against the backdrop of an established theory or hypothesis, has a low probability to confirm that theory or hypothesis, see Rohlfing, *Case Studies and Causal Inference: An Integrative Framework*, 84.

<sup>50</sup> For an example and thoughtful critique of such assumption, see Frank Costigliola, "'Mixed Up' and 'Contact': Culture and Emotion among the Allies in the Second World War," *The International History Review* 20, no. 4 (1998): 802.

<sup>51</sup> Paul Saurette, "You Dissin Me? Humiliation and Post 9/11 Global Politics," *Review of International Studies* 32, no. 3 (2006): 499.

<sup>52</sup> This is because least-likely cases follow what Jack Levy calls the "Sinatra inference": "if I can make it there I can make it anywhere", see Jack S. Levy, "Qualitative Methods in International Relations," in *Millennial Reflections on International Studies*, ed. Michael Brecher and Frank P. Harvey (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 442. Note that to have confidence in the 'Sinatra inference', alternative explanations and the likelihood of their predictions must be taken into account, see Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2005), 122-124.



analysis by facilitating the elimination of those varying factors at the cross-case level.<sup>53</sup> In addition to the broad temporal variation, the chosen targets of regime change provide some level of spatial variation. To be sure, one could argue that my case selection is somehow biased because three out of four target states under study are in the Western hemisphere, the "backyard" of the United States, potentially confounding the analysis, as Latin American peculiarities might have an underappreciated bearing on the US decision to engage in regime change. I try to counter such claims by showing that those factors facilitating US regime change in Latin America, expectations of compliance towards chosen targets and other potentially influential factors such as power disparities in bilateral relations, are in fact similar across different regions in which the US has engaged in regime change.

A potential criticism of my case selection could be the often-invoked mantra that a no-variance design on the outcome of interest, commonly referred to as 'selecting on the dependent variable', leads to devastating bias and hampers inferential leverage. Especially Barbara Geddes' admonition that studying positive cases without paying attention to their negative counterparts might lead to faulty inference if one concludes from such a study that "any characteristic that the selected cases share is a cause",<sup>54</sup> should be taken seriously. To avoid such faulty inference, my individual case studies involve a careful assessment of US foreign policy towards the target state in question prior to the intervention decision, guaranteeing variation in the US approach towards the target, the outcome of interest.<sup>55</sup> This strategy is most explicit in the fourth case study, the 2003 Iraq War, in which I analyze the shift in US foreign policy towards Iraq from containment (negative outcome) to regime change (positive outcome) in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.<sup>56</sup>

---

<sup>53</sup> This case selection technique follows the most-different design, also called the method of agreement, in which one seeks out "cases that register the same outcomes and have maximum diversity on other attributes", see Gerring, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*, 143. The basic idea behind this design is that "differences cannot explain similarities", see Rohlfing, *Case Studies and Causal Inference: An Integrative Framework*, 105. Note, however, that this method is insufficient to take into account complex interactions between potentially influential causes, offering only preliminary leverage at the cross-case level. Moreover, it is an inadequate method for probing whether or not specific causes are individually sufficient to produce the outcome, see *ibid.*, 66.

<sup>54</sup> Barbara Geddes, "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics," *Political Analysis* 2, no. 1 (1990): 132-133. Note that while King, Keohane, and Verba have popularized the notion that selecting on the dependent variable is dangerous, they make the opposite argument: according to them, the danger of no-variance designs is not an overestimation of causal relationships, but rather their underestimation, see King, Keohane, and Verba, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*, 129-132.

<sup>55</sup> This comes close to what is referred to as "over-time (or before-after) case comparisons", see Andrew Bennett and Colin Elman, "Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield," *Comparative Political Studies* 40, no. 2 (2007): 176.

<sup>56</sup> Based on this distinction, one could argue that, strictly speaking, the empirical part of this study comprises four different units, but more than four cases. US foreign policy towards Iraq, for example, would be, according

Moreover, this study is not exposed to the type of selection bias mentioned by Barbara Geddes and others for a second reason: qualitative methodologists show convincingly that while exclusively focusing on positive cases indeed leaves one vulnerable to selection bias at the cross-case level, within-case analysis is much less subject to this kind of bias. Following a different logic of inference by seeking out what has been called "internal evidence about causation" instead of relying on cross-case comparisons, within-case analysis, the major source of analytical leverage in this dissertation, is relatively immune from the dangers of selection bias caused by 'selection on the dependent variable'.<sup>57</sup>

### Source Material

Following established guidelines to help minimize unwarranted selectivity and bias,<sup>58</sup> I gather evidence from disparate sources: archival sources and other primary documents, historiographies of the cases studied, memoirs written by policymakers, a number of interviews with administration officials from the George W. Bush administration for the 2003 Iraq case, and newspaper reports mainly from US dailies. With the help of triangulation, I try to contextualize consulted sources by comparing pieces of evidence across different types of sources and by drawing on a wide range of different historiographies in order to grasp the historical and political context of decisions.<sup>59</sup> Especially the use of contemporary news reports helps contextualize secondary sources and, more importantly, archival government documents, providing valuable information on the political context in which foreign policy is elaborated and articulated.<sup>60</sup>

---

to this view, the unit of analysis comprising two cases, one before and one after 9/11. For a definition of unit as a "spatially bounded phenomenon" and the relationship between units and cases with units comprising cases "observed at discrete points in time", see John Gerring, "What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for?," *American Political Science Review* 98, no. 2 (2004): 342.

<sup>57</sup> David Collier, James Mahoney, and Jason Seawright, "Claiming Too Much: Warnings about Selection Bias," in *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*, ed. David Collier and Henry E. Brady (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 93. In the words of these authors, within-case analysis "makes use of tools for causal inference - that is, causal-process observations - that do not depend on examining relationships among variables across cases", see *ibid.*, 96. See also Bennett and Elman, "Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods," 461.

<sup>58</sup> Cameron Thies identifies "investigator bias and unwarranted selectivity in the use of historical source materials" as the two main problems of qualitative historical research. See Cameron G. Thies, "A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations," *International Studies Perspectives* 3, no. 4 (2002): 351.

<sup>59</sup> Ian Lustick correctly notes that secondary sources do not neutrally describe historical events, but rather create their own historiography. Over-reliance on a limited number of such sources runs the risk of importing the historians' preconceptions and analytic biases. See Ian S. Lustick, "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias," *American Political Science Review* 90, no. 3 (1996).

<sup>60</sup> For the importance of contextualizing primary records, see George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 97.

In terms of primary sources, I make extensive use of declassified government documents. My starting point for the first three cases, Cuba, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic, is the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series (FRUS), a vast, officially edited collection of hitherto classified documents on major US foreign policy decisions.<sup>61</sup> For additional depth in primary records, I have also consulted the personal papers of two presidents and two secretaries of state stored in the *Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress* for my first two cases: the *Theodore Roosevelt Papers* and the *Elihu Root Papers* for the 1906 Cuban intervention and the *William H. Taft Papers* and *Philander C. Knox Papers* for the 1909 intervention in Nicaragua. These collections provide valuable insight into the personal correspondence and governmental documents of the top US foreign policy elite. Regarding the 1965 Dominican intervention, I heavily rely on archival materials from the *Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library* in Austin, Texas, especially the *National Security Country File* on the Dominican Republic and recordings of telephone conversations between President Johnson and his aides. With respect to my last case, the 2003 invasion of Iraq, almost all relevant US government documents remain classified. The *National Security Archive*, a private organization based in Washington, D.C., however, has made a significant number of Freedom of Information Act requests (FOIA) and presents compilations of obtained documents pertinent to Iraq in several *Electronic Briefing Books*.<sup>62</sup> A small number of other primary sources have been provided by Donald Rumsfeld and Douglas Feith, George W. Bush's Secretary of Defense and Undersecretary of Defense for Policy during the 2003 invasion of Iraq.<sup>63</sup> This breadth and depth of different source across and within my four cases should help make my analysis more reliable.

While the central argument of this study about the role of emotional frustration in US regime change decisions hinges upon the quality of the source material used, tracing the emotional state of US foreign policy elites is no easy task. Emotions are usually guarded from the public and even with regard to the decision-making process within US administrations, evidence for emotional frustration is hard to come by, as "top-level policymakers are

---

<sup>61</sup> For further information on the content of this series, see <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/about-frus>.

<sup>62</sup> I have consulted the briefing books no. 326, 328, 330, and 418 from the archive's online collection. For further information, see <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/index.html>.

<sup>63</sup> Douglas Feith's memoir contains an appendix with a selection of government memos and other documents pertinent to the administration's regime change decision, see Douglas J. Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 531-565. Similarly, documents on Iraq cited in Donald Rumsfeld's memoir are available online, see <http://papers.rumsfeld.com/endnotes/>. See Donald Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir* (New York: Sentinel, 2011).

motivated to conduct the decision process in ways that will enable them to assure the public later that the decision was made after careful multisided deliberation".<sup>64</sup> Stephen Pelz makes a similar argument, showing that "many international leaders take pains to disguise their reasoning and purposes".<sup>65</sup> To deal with these problems, I pay particular attention to informal primary sources like personal letters or telephone conversations with friends, i.e. documents that provide a more probable window into the emotional state of US leaders.<sup>66</sup> Relying on these types of documents therefore helps me trace the emotional state of presidents and influential foreign policymakers within US governments.

### **Plan of the Study**

The plan of the dissertation is as follows. Part I has two chapters. The following chapter (Chapter One) presents the subject of inquiry, i.e. the recurrence of regime change in US foreign policy. It shows that with more than two dozen regime change operations, it is a relevant instrument of US foreign policy that deserves to be inquired into. In terms of theory, its relevance stems from the discipline's broad mission to deal with the foreign policy behavior of states, with intervention decisions, and the use of force in the international arena. For the policy debate, this inquiry is relevant because it helps us understand what policymakers strive for when they engage in regime change and what implications this has for the effectiveness of regime change. After having laid out the general research question of this dissertation and having conceptualized regime change as the subject of inquiry, the chapter turns to conventional explanations briefly sketched in this introduction. It argues that particularly literature on democracy promotion and systemic constraints on state behavior provide good starting points for the generation of alternative explanations. It will show, however, that arguments discernable from the literature on foreign-imposed regime change and bargaining theory are insufficient, be it theoretically or empirically, to account for the pattern of regime change in US foreign policy. Chapter Two presents the dissertation's main argument, postulating a relationship between the level of emotional frustration of leading foreign policymakers and their propensity to engage in regime change in foreign countries. It starts with a discussion of emotion and its place in IR theory, before turning to the

---

<sup>64</sup> George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 102.

<sup>65</sup> Stephen Pelz, "Toward a New Diplomatic History: Two and a Half Cheers for International Relations Methods," in *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations*, ed. Colin Elman and Miriam F. Elman (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2001), 100.

<sup>66</sup> Note that, unfortunately, the quality and nature of such documents vary. While there is a large collection of Theodore Roosevelt's personal letters sent to and received from close friends and aides, an excellent source of information for this project, there is, for example, a much more limited number of similar documents for the presidency of William H. Taft.

conceptualization of the theory's main explanatory phenomenon, i.e. emotional frustration. It then discusses the relevance of foreign policy expectations, perceptions of obstruction, and specifies their relationship with the experience of emotional frustration, arguing that emotional reactions to obstruction caused by foreign states is more likely when foreign policymakers have an expansive set of expectations towards the target state and perceive obstruction to be rooted in intolerable hatred.

Part II constitutes the empirical part of the dissertation, consisting of four historical case studies of US regime change operations. Chapter Three deals with Theodore Roosevelt's decision to intervene in Cuba in 1906 and to re-occupy the island for the duration of three years through to 1909. It analyzes Roosevelt's prior vision for and hegemonic expectations towards the young Cuban republic before intervening and his general frustration with Cuban state conduct, both international and domestic. Chapter Four turns to another pre-World War I case of US regime change, i.e. William H. Taft's series of interventions in Nicaragua from 1909 to 1912. In this era of so-called dollar diplomacy, the Taft administration grew increasingly more frustrated with long-time Nicaraguan President Jose Santos Zelaya and decided to interject itself in the domestic struggle for power between Zelaya supporters and opponents. Chapter Five turns to Lyndon B. Johnson's Dominican intervention in 1965, detailing how in the context of the Cold War, the US government expended considerable efforts to prevent the return of the ousted Dominican President Juan Bosch whose supporters were involved in a violent standoff with Dominican junta forces in April 1965. The chapter discusses Johnson's rationale to send more than 20,000 troops to the island in what was the biggest US intervention in the Western hemisphere since the 1930s. Chapter Six turns to the arguably most prominent case of US regime change: the 2003 invasion of Iraq. This chapter illustrates how, after the terrorist attacks of September 11, Saddam Hussein's obstructive behavior was perceived to be an expression of his deep anti-Americanism and how this perception combined with hegemonic expectations contributed to the Bush administration's vehement desire to overthrow the Iraqi dictator after 9/11.

The study closes with a concluding chapter that not only summarizes the main problematic of the study, the theoretical argument, and the empirical findings, but also presents a set of implications for international relations scholarship. First, the study makes a contribution to the debate on the significance of public justifications for foreign policy actions. Showing that while especially realist theories have rightly cautioned us against taking public rhetoric at face value and assuming that they accurately reflect the actual driving forces for foreign policy, realists themselves give too much credit to justifications

based on supposed threats to national security. To the extent that regime change is predicated upon emotional frustration rather than security concerns, realists thus commit the same mistakes they accuse others of making. Second, turning to the debate on US grand strategy, the study contributes to the discussion between proponents of primacy ("deep engagement") and proponents of restraint (retrenchment). On the basis of one of the main arguments of the study, namely that hegemonic expectations enhance the potential for frustration, potentially leading to emotional frustration if obstruction is perceived in a certain way, i.e. as rooted in hatred and hostility, I show that both advocates and critics of the grand strategy of primacy have paid little attention to the unintended consequences of such expectations. While proponents of primacy assure that their preferred grand strategy does not necessarily result in a more aggressive foreign policy, they underestimate that hegemonic expectations, which can be said to be more akin to such a grand strategy, in fact do make a turn to aggression much more likely than expected. Third, this study makes a contribution to the debate on the effectiveness of regime change. It shows that it makes little sense to analyze the prospects of "foreign-imposed regime change" for democratization in the target state if we know little about the regime changer's motivations. By demonstrating that emotional frustration plays a more consistent role in regime change decisions, the study implies that to judge effectiveness, we need to assess the purpose of regime change. Ironically, if the purpose of regime change is understood as a means to get rid of a menacing foreign leader and at the same time to discharge frustration, one could argue that it is a highly effective tool of foreign policy. Finally, I show how the empirical findings of this study contribute to the debate about how policymakers assess state intentions, focusing on the effects of imputing hatred to the behavior of target states.

# CHAPTER ONE

## The Recurrence of Regime Change and the State of the Art

This chapter has two tasks. It first conceptualizes the practice of regime change as the principle phenomenon of interest by defining the concept and specifying its attributes, followed by a discussion of the comparability of regime change cases, also called the homogeneity of the population, and a description of the recurrent, yet non-habitual pattern of regime change in US foreign policy. Second, the chapter critically evaluates existing explanations or intellectual resources from which potential explanations can be generated. It canvasses a range of different literatures, discussing studies on 'foreign-imposed regime change' (FIRC), structural explanations for intervention, democracy promotion, and bargaining theory, showing that no approach has been able to provide a convincing account of regime change in US foreign policy.

### The Recurrence of Regime Change

#### *What is Regime Change?*

The conceptualization of regime change is an essential task, not least because the term regime has carried meanings different from how it shall be defined in this study. I do not refer to regimes as international arrangements defined as "sets of implicit or explicit principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures."<sup>67</sup> Instead, here the term regime denotes a state's domestic political authority structure governing the "relation of rulers to ruled within a given state's borders" and "the administration of the state's domestic coercive power".<sup>68</sup> James Rosenau defines the authority structure of a given society as the "identity of those who make the decisions that are binding for the entire society and/or [...] the processes through which such decisions are made",<sup>69</sup> taking into account both actors and the institutional framework constituted by a given regime.

To further clarify the concept of regime, two differentiations from related concepts are in order: first, to the extent that a state is defined as an "ensemble formed by combining

---

<sup>67</sup> Stephen D. Krasner, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables," *International Organization* 36, no. 2 (1982): 186.

<sup>68</sup> John M. Owen, "The Foreign Imposition of Domestic Institutions," *International Organization* 56, no. 2 (2002): 379.

<sup>69</sup> James N. Rosenau, "The Concept of Intervention," *Journal of International Affairs* 22, no. 2 (1968): 169.

government, population and territory",<sup>70</sup> a state comprises more than a regime. While states and regimes should not be equated with each other, regimes form a constitutive part of states, translating the state's claim to the monopoly of force into concrete and binding rules for society and thereby constituting an integral element of the state-society nexus. Second, the concept of regime is to be distinguished from the concept of government. Regimes define the fundamental rules of authority. Governments in turn are specific bodies of authority. Being conceptually more narrow than regimes, they are formed and replaced by the fundamental rules established by the pertinent regime. Regimes can be categorized into different regime types, with the most basic distinction being one made between democratic and non-democratic regimes.<sup>71</sup> Governments, at least within democratic regimes, can be categorized into different systems of governments, for instance presidential and parliamentary systems.

Based on this definition of regime, regime change refers in its widest sense to the transformation of a state's political authority structure. To the extent that the sources of change can be determined, the manipulation that is brought about by purposeful actors can generally have two sources: domestic or foreign. As clear as the conceptual distinction between domestic and foreign-imposed regime change might seem, the lines between the two are blurry in practice. In many cases of revolution, for example, change is driven by domestic actors who are decisively supported by outside powers, often clandestinely. Only cases in which outside powers use their own military to stage an intervention can we confidently identify outside influence that is decisive rather than subsidiary. Domestic regime change, the first type of regime change, is internally generated change, stemming from domestic forces such as a country's class structure, elite behavior, or economic performance, and has been subject to much of the democratization and regime transition literature in the subfield of comparative politics.<sup>72</sup> This study does not deal with this type of regime change. Instead, I exclusively focus on foreign regime change, a type of regime change that involves transformation through "the coercion of outside powers".<sup>73</sup> For this purpose, regime change, also called foreign-imposed regime change, shall in this study exclusively refer to *forcible*

---

<sup>70</sup> Rod Hague and Martin Harrop, *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction*, 6th ed. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 7.

<sup>71</sup> Note that the category of non-democratic or authoritarian regimes is admittedly broad, as "different kinds of authoritarianism differ from each other as much as they differ from democracy". See Barbara Geddes, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?," *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (1999): 121.

<sup>72</sup> Steven E. Finkel, Anibal Perez-Linan, and Mitchell A. Seligson, "The Effects of US Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building, 1990-2003," *World Politics* 59, no. 3 (2007): 408-409.

<sup>73</sup> Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 1.



*intervention by an outside power aimed at transforming a target state's domestic political authority structure.*

### *The Conceptual Attributes of Regime Change*

The concept of regime change defined here features a number of characteristics worth specifying: first, in regime change, change is always irregular in light of the rules of the regime that is changed, barring the improbable existence of rules set out by a regime that allow for its abolishment. Whether domestic or foreign-induced, regime change can therefore not be brought about through regular means such as elections in a democratic regime. The irregular nature of regime change is concomitant with a violation of what Stephen Krasner calls "Westphalian sovereignty", i.e. the target state's "political organization based on the exclusion of external actors from authority structures".<sup>74</sup> Second, the magnitude of change sets regime change apart from other types of change. In contrast to annexation or territorial conquest, regime change does not entirely demolish the integrity of the target state inasmuch as it does not affect its territorial boundaries. Defined this way, cases of intervention that do not retain the juridical sovereignty of the target state do not lie within the conceptual purview of regime change. True, the target state might suffer a "formal loss of foreign policymaking power"<sup>75</sup> in the course or aftermath of regime change, such as in a temporary occupation by the regime changer, but regime change does neither eliminate nor absorb the target state. Put differently, regime change carries with it the withdrawal of recognition from the targeted regime, but it does not amount to a permanent withdrawal of state recognition. Two empirical examples illustrate this distinction. The 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq is a case of regime change, because the intervention dismantled the rule of Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath party, but did not constitute any territorial changes. The 1845 annexation of the Republic of Texas by the US, in contrast, cannot be considered a case of regime change, because it not only dismantled the Texan regime, but led to the death of the Republic of Texas altogether.

On the other side of the spectrum, the depth of change brought about by regime change is higher than what might be called government change if the latter is carried out in accordance with the rules established by its regime. Barack Obama's 2008 presidential election victory, for instance, brought about a change in government from a Republican to a Democratic administration, but did not constitute a change in regime. While such regular

---

<sup>74</sup> Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 4. See also Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 3.

<sup>75</sup> Tanisha Fazal calls this condition "state death", see Tanisha M. Fazal, "State Death in the International System," *International Organization* 58, no. 2 (2004): 312.

government changes are clearly to be distinguished from regime change, the categorization of irregular changes of state leaders that leave governing institutions intact, have been subject to debate in the literature. Differentiating foreign-imposed regime changes (FIRC) that "change only leaders from those that also change institutions",<sup>76</sup> one study considers what it calls "leadership FIRC" as one of two basic variants of regime change. Another study agrees by arguing that regime change can "mean an externally imposed change in either leaders or political institutions", proposing a distinction between "foreign-imposed leadership change and foreign-imposed institutional change".<sup>77</sup> Others exclude from their analysis foreign interventions that "replace one ruler or government with another under the same institutions".<sup>78</sup> Having defined regimes as elites plus institutions, this study opts for a more exclusive conceptualization of regime change. Changes at the elite level that "are fought over the occupancy of existing roles in the structure of political authority"<sup>79</sup> without transforming the authority structure itself are thus excluded from the purview of the concept.

Third, regime change is a purposeful practice. For a case to qualify as regime change, the intent to transform the target state's political authority structure must precede the actual use of force. This definition excludes cases in which the promotion of a given regime comes as an afterthought to war, i.e. cases that John Owen calls "ex post promotions".<sup>80</sup> Such interventions are undertaken for reasons different than effecting a change in the target state's regime, whereas in the case of regime change, called "ex ante promotions" in Owen's terminology, targeting the authority structure is the very reason force is directed at the target state. This definition excludes cases like the post-World War II occupation of Germany because, as Michael Walzer correctly shows, "[i]n the case of Nazism, regime change was the consequence, not the cause, of the war fought by the allies". It was neither "the aim of the wars declared in 1939 by Poland, France, and Britain to transform the German state",<sup>81</sup> nor that of the United States, as the US Congress declared war on Germany in December 1941,

---

<sup>76</sup> Downes and Monten, "Forced to Be Free?: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization," 112.

<sup>77</sup> Peic and Reiter, "Foreign-Imposed Regime Change, State Power and Civil War Onset, 1920-2004," 454.

<sup>78</sup> Owen, "The Foreign Imposition of Domestic Institutions," 379.

<sup>79</sup> Raymond Tanter and Manus Midlarsky, "A Theory of Revolution," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (1967): 265.

<sup>80</sup> Owen makes a clear distinction between what he calls "ex ante promotions" and "ex post promotion", i.e. promotions "in which the initial attack was for other reasons – typically to gain strategic assets in wartime – and then, following conquest, the occupying military imposed a regime on the occupied state", see Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 2.

<sup>81</sup> Michael Walzer, "Regime Change and Just War," *Dissent* 53, no. 3 (2006): 103.

but designs for post-war Germany were contemplated only years later, for example during the Yalta Conference in February 1945, when the defeat of Nazi Germany became more likely.<sup>82</sup>

Fourth, regime change is a military intervention involving the use of force and the deployment of the regime changer's military across borders. Defining regime change as what R.J. Vincent has called "coercive interference",<sup>83</sup> I exclude non-coercive means of intervention like propaganda or foreign aid from the purview of the concept. Covert operations are equally excluded, though their case is less clear: while they feature means potentially just as coercive as those employed by overt military intervention, the secret nature of their use of force sets covert operations apart from regime change proper, suggesting that their underlying rationale is qualitatively different from overt operations. Fifth, I do not specify the change brought about by regime change operations in terms of regime type promoted. Cases of both democracy promotion and what we might call democracy prevention are within the conceptual scope of regime change as defined here.

Sixth, for a case to qualify as regime change, the transformation of the political authority structure effected by an outside power need not be directed at the incumbent regime. If, for example, a state intervenes in a civil war, supporting the incumbent regime in a standoff with rebels who are on the brink of taking power, it would make little sense to disregard such a case solely on the grounds that the intervener sided with those in power rather than with the rebels. In such a case, the intervention is just as much an act of transformation as in cases in which the intervener supports rebel groups against the regime of the target state, provided that the change effected by the intervener is decisive rather than subsidiary, an issue discussed above. While a more narrow definition of regime change that exclusively focuses on opposition towards the incumbent might be, in a semantic sense, more in line with what we commonly would label regime change, it would be misleading insofar as it would disregard cases exhibiting the same logic of intervention without targeting the incumbent regime, running the risk of arbitrarily truncating the universe of cases. This is why this study considers both support for (in the face of domestic opposition) and opposition to the incumbent regime as two variants of intervention belonging to the same concept of regime change as long as the nature of engagement is transformative and meant to affect the course of struggles over the target state's domestic authority structure.

---

<sup>82</sup> Walzer shows that the "allies confirmed their commitment to democratization at Potsdam in July of 1945", see *ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> R.J. Vincent, *Nonintervention and International Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), 8.

Finally, regime change shares a number of similarities with other state practices, but it is clearly distinguishable from such cognate concepts like war or intervention more broadly speaking. There are two important differences between regime change and war defined by Hedley Bull as "organized violence carried on by political units against each other".<sup>84</sup> First, wars are fought between states, whereas the principal domain of regime change operations lies within one state, the target state.<sup>85</sup> To be sure, both regime changers and states initiating war engage in an "act with belligerent intent",<sup>86</sup> with the means chosen being so similar that many regime change operations, for example the 2003 invasion of Iraq, are referred to as war (e.g. the 2003 Iraq War). Yet, what makes regime change different from war in the conventional sense is its one-sided nature of organized violence, carried out by the regime changer, but not by the target state. Second, while wars can be fought for a variety of reasons, their purposes having changed over time,<sup>87</sup> the goal of regime change, by definition, is always the transformation of a target state's authority structure, a very specific purpose that has remained unchanged across time.

Turning to intervention as another cognate concept, regime change constitutes one specific variant of intervention. What regime change has in common with other types of intervention is its one-sided nature of organized violence, setting intervention apart from war.<sup>88</sup> In terms of purposes, earlier definitions of intervention come surprisingly close to what this study calls regime change. Introducing what he called a "scientific approach to intervention", a reaction to what he perceived as the tendency to equate intervention with foreign policy influence,<sup>89</sup> James Rosenau defined intervention narrowly as being of a convention-breaking and authority-oriented nature. Especially the second attribute, which restricted the concept to cases in which a foreign policy was "directed at changing or preserving the structure of political authority in the target society", seems to be in line with

---

<sup>84</sup> Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 178. Hidemi Suganami defines war as an "overt military conflict between sovereign states above a certain minimum level of intensity", see Hidemi Suganami, "Explaining War: Some Critical Observations," *International Relations* 16, no. 3 (2002): 307.

<sup>85</sup> Jentleson and Levite, "The Analysis of Protracted Foreign Military Intervention," 5-8. Note that Jentleson and Levite deal with "foreign military intervention" rather than regime change. R.J. Vincent considers cases in which the intervener is concerned with the domestic political authority structure of the target state as cases of intervention, whereas cases in which the target state's foreign policy is the bone of contention are considered to be cases of war or other types of interstate conflict, see Vincent, *Nonintervention and International Order*, 3-6.

<sup>86</sup> Suganami, "Explaining War: Some Critical Observations," 316.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 307. For the changing purpose of military interventions, see Martha Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).

<sup>88</sup> Martha Finnemore shows that the distinction between intervention and war is not as clear-cut in practice, since there are no universally valid criteria to set the two concepts neatly apart, see Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, 8-10.

<sup>89</sup> Rosenau, "The Concept of Intervention," 166.

core characteristics of regime change.<sup>90</sup> But inasmuch as the concept of intervention comprises a range of different purposes like peacekeeping, or humanitarian aid, it is broader than the concept of regime change. Historically, intervention purposes have been even more varied, for example "to punish violations of natural law, suppress slavery, prevent revolution, defend property rights or the rights of international creditors, change the nature of domestic political systems [regime change], protect religious minorities, prevent gross human rights violations".<sup>91</sup> Defined this way, the purpose of intervention can be significantly broader than the purpose of regime change.

### *The Comparability of Regime Change Cases*

After having conceptualized regime change for the purpose of this study, this section turns to the universe of cases, also called the extension of the concept.<sup>92</sup> As previously mentioned, this study has a broad empirical scope, comprising US regime change cases from the beginning of the twentieth century until today. I claim that these cases of US regime change from different periods spanning the entire twentieth century are sufficiently similar to be part of the same population denoted by my concept of regime change.<sup>93</sup> Discussing the conceptual extension of regime change is central, particularly because two criticisms might be leveled at the claimed comparability (or homogeneity) of cases belonging to the population of regime change. First, the homogeneity of the population might be questioned on the basis of changes in the international normative context concerning the norm of sovereignty and non-intervention. More precisely, a critic could argue that pre-1945 cases are in fact not comparable to post-1945 cases, because norms of sovereignty and against conquest were codified and became part of the international normative structure only after World War II. Tanisha Fazal, for example, shows that state death and "coercive territorial change" have

---

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., 167. In a similar definition of intervention, Oran Young makes the "authority-oriented" character of intervention more explicit by distinguishing between what might be called policy change and polity change: "[s]traightforward efforts to induce changes in particular policies on the part of another government without attempting to alter the government itself in any important way are not included under the heading of intervention". See Young, "Intervention and International Systems," 178. Note, however, that, in an important deviation from the focus on the use of force in the way regime change is defined here, neither Rosenau nor Young specifies the nature of foreign policy behavior constituting intervention, thereby allowing for a wide range of different means of intervention, force-based and otherwise.

<sup>91</sup> Christian Reus-Smit, "The Concept of Intervention," *Review of International Studies* 39, no. 5 (2013): 1066.

<sup>92</sup> In the words of Wesley Salmon, "[t]he extension of a word consists of the class of all objects to which that word correctly applies", see Wesley C. Salmon, *Logic* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1973 [1963]), 123. Discussing concept formation, Giovanni Sartori has introduced this terminology to political science, see Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review* 64, no. 4 (1970): 1041.

<sup>93</sup> John Gerring calls the extent to which cases are part of the same population unit homogeneity or case comparability, see Gerring, "What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for?," 348. See also Giovanni Sartori, "Comparing and Miscomparing," *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 3, no. 3 (1991).

"decreased markedly" in the post-World World II world because of such changes.<sup>94</sup> While acknowledging that a norm "protecting states' territorial sovereignty" was in existence even before 1945, Fazal argues that "strong Allied support might account for its power after the war",<sup>95</sup> when such a norm could finally take hold and become influential in international politics.

As a foreign policy practice that "entails violations of sovereignty",<sup>96</sup> the standing of norms on sovereignty and non-intervention has important implications for the homogeneity of the universe of cases under investigation. After all, one would have a hard time treating interventions as regime change in times in which sovereignty meant little in international politics. It is correct to argue that the Charter of the United Nations played an undoubtedly central role in the codification of norms of sovereignty and non-intervention and that the post-1945 world has been indeed marked by this enshrining of such norms. This should not mean, however, that sovereignty and non-intervention was an insignificant factor in pre-1945 international politics, potentially threatening the homogeneity of empirical phenomena I call regime change across 1945. In fact, considerations about sovereignty figured prominently in the decision-making process leading to pre-1945 cases of what I call regime change, giving credence to the comparability of pre- and post-1945 cases. As the example of the Theodore Roosevelt administration shows, precisely because US statesmen were aware of the sovereignty of target states and a potential anti-American backlash in case of intervention did they go to great lengths to reassure their neighbors that, in the words of Theodore Roosevelt's Secretary of State Elihu Root, the United States wished for "no territory except our own; for no sovereignty except the sovereignty over ourselves [i.e. people of the United States]".<sup>97</sup> Even when intervention was deemed unavoidable, Roosevelt argued that it "should be veiled as to avoid hurting the feelings of those in whose behalf we are interfering [i.e. Latin American target states]".<sup>98</sup> To be sure, these considerations did not prevent Roosevelt to engage in regime change. Yet, they show that sovereignty figured in the administration's

---

<sup>94</sup> Tanisha M. Fazal, *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 169.

<sup>95</sup> Fazal, "State Death in the International System," 340.

<sup>96</sup> Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 3.

<sup>97</sup> Root, July 31, 1906, quoted in James B. Scott, "Elihu Root," in *The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, Vol. 9*, ed. Samuel F. Bemis (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1928), 217. Allan Millett shows that that this reassurance of respect for the sovereignty of neighboring countries was important is to the Roosevelt administration, see Allan R. Millett, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1968), 64.

<sup>98</sup> Roosevelt, April 30, 1906, quoted in Millett, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909*, 65.

calculations, making such pre-World War II and even pre-World War I cases comparable to their post-1945 counterparts.

A second line of criticism might suggest that applying the term regime change to historical cases is anachronistic and therefore problematic. Discussing the applicability of the concept of intervention to the seventeenth and eighteenth century, Martha Finnemore for example cautions against the use of "deductively imposed definitions" that do not take into account the historical context of cases under investigation.<sup>99</sup> Instead, she advocates looking at how participants themselves view their action and what discourse they use to refer to it. The question of "whether it is appropriate to use *our* current vocabulary to make intelligible the practices of people living in the past [emphasis in original]",<sup>100</sup> is indeed important. It is certainly true that the terminology of regime change is an invention of the 1990s.<sup>101</sup> The practice that is denoted by the term, however, is older than the term itself, given that "actors can use different words to refer to the same thing".<sup>102</sup> Without referring to their actions as regime change before the emergence of the terminology, US foreign policy elites were well aware that what they were engaged in was the overthrow of foreign governments. In the case of the 1906 Cuban intervention, senator Joseph B. Foraker referred to the administration's action as intervention "with force of arms to overthrow established government".<sup>103</sup> Similarly, in the case of the 1909 – 1912 intervention in Nicaragua, there was a general understanding among US decision-makers that their actions in Nicaragua constituted an intervention directed at the Nicaraguan regime, something we would call regime change today. During the Cold War, an alternative term became popular for the same practice: rollback. Defined as a grand strategy that "seeks to eliminate communist influence worldwide", prescribing "active U.S. support for anti-communist forces"<sup>104</sup> and seeking "not merely to contain the target state within its borders, but to overthrow its ruling regime",<sup>105</sup> rollback comprised means such as overt military intervention to replace communist regimes.<sup>106</sup> As these examples show, the

---

<sup>99</sup> Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, 10.

<sup>100</sup> Edward Keene, "International Hierarchy and the Origins of the Modern Practice of Intervention," *Review of International Studies* 39, no. 5 (2013): 1080.

<sup>101</sup> Litwak, *Regime Change: U.S. Strategy Through the Prism of 9/11*, xiii.

<sup>102</sup> Reus-Smit, "The Concept of Intervention," 3. See also Christian Reus-Smit, "Struggles for Individual Rights and the Expansion of the International System," *International Organization* 65, no. 2 (2011): 218-219.

<sup>103</sup> Joseph B. Foraker, *Notes of a Busy Life, Vol. 2* (Cincinnati: Steward & Kidd, 1916), 56.

<sup>104</sup> Stephen M. Walt, "The Case for Finite Containment: Analyzing U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security* 14, no. 1 (1989): 9.

<sup>105</sup> Litwak, *Regime Change: U.S. Strategy Through the Prism of 9/11*, 110.

<sup>106</sup> Robert S. Litwak, *Outlier States: American Strategies to Change, Contain, or Engage Regimes* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2012), 94. According to Litwak, "the term 'rollback' can be traced to the early Cold War era, when critics of the Truman administration's containment strategy first used it during the 1952 presidential election campaign", see Litwak, *Regime Change: U.S. Strategy Through the Prism of 9/11*,

lack of the term regime change should not be a marker of the existence of the practice under investigation. Regime changes that occurred before the pertinent terminology emerged, belong to the same universe of cases as those that occurred in the 1990s and later.

### *Recurrent, But Not Routinized*

Due to the paucity of intellectual thought on its place, status, and role as a state practice, there is a common tendency to misrepresent the prevalence of regime change by describing it in terms that either underpredict or overpredict its occurrence in international relations. On the one hand, we tend to underpredict its prevalence if we constrain regime change to what is one of its most recent and perhaps most commonly known empirical manifestations, the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003. Focusing solely on Iraq has undesirable ramifications for how prevalent we think regime change is in international politics, for reducing regime change as a general concept to one of its admittedly most prominent cases carries with it the danger of downplaying the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and regime change more broadly, to something unusual or unique. Indeed, some scholars regard the 2003 Iraq War as an anomaly in American foreign policy. Stefan Halper and Jonathan Clarke, for instance, argue that US foreign policy under George W. Bush, including the invasion of Iraq, was heavily influenced by the neoconservative movement which, according to them, managed to hijack the Bush administration after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, but was a far cry from "balanced conservatism" and thus "little more than an aberration" in the history of US foreign relations.<sup>107</sup> Many others similarly subscribe to what has been termed "neoonism", i.e. "the strong belief that something distinct about the Bush administration constituted a *necessary* condition for war [in Iraq] [emphasis in original]".<sup>108</sup> Put differently, "neoonism" denotes the claim that regime change in Iraq would not have occurred, had the Bush administration been spared from neoconservative influence. Importantly, insofar as attaching explanatory weight to neoconservatism has the consequence of elevating the presence of an assumingly anomalous ideological group of influential foreign policy elites to the status of a necessary

---

109. For a revival of the rollback strategy under Ronald Reagan, see William M LeoGrande, "Rollback or Containment?: The United States, Nicaragua, and the Search for Peace in Central America," *International Security* 11, no. 2 (1986).

<sup>107</sup> By calling neoconservatism an aberration, Halper and Clarke express both their normative disagreement with neoconservatism as a political ideology ("fatal error") and their view that neoconservatism is temporary, transient and ultimately bound to disappear, "so long as the normal checks and balances of the American political genius hold sway". See Halper and Clarke, *America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order*, 7. For the argument that neoconservatism hijacked the Bush administration, see p. 139.

<sup>108</sup> Frank P. Harvey, *Explaining the Iraq War: Counterfactual Theory, Logic and Evidence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 2. Footnote six on the same page provides an excellent overview of publications that subscribe to what Harvey calls "neoonism".



condition for a state's engagement in regime change, these "neoliberalist" views, wittingly or unwittingly, underpredict the prevalence of regime change in international politics. For if regime change grows out of the hijacking of foreign policy by a group or ideology whose sway is said to be short-lived but necessary, regime change must logically be quite an unusual outcome.

On the other hand, some describe regime change in terms that unavoidably overpredict the prevalence of regime change, giving the impression that regime change is a ubiquitous fact of international politics. John Owen, for example, provides a convincing critique of the first view outlined above, showing that regime change is in fact far from unusual or unique, but rather a long-standing practice in international politics. His extensive historical dataset counts 209 cases of forcible overthrows between 1510 and 2010.<sup>109</sup> Yet, by presenting regime change as a phenomenon in international relations "common enough that we can call it a normal tool of statecraft",<sup>110</sup> Owen runs the risk of exaggerating the extent to which regime change is routinized as a means of foreign policy. Surely, his 209 cases are an impressively large number, convincingly cautioning us against considering the 2003 invasion of Iraq an anomalous practice and simultaneously raising questions about why regime change has been so understudied in the field of IR. Regime change, however, is not a routinized state practice, because the regime change tally must be judged against the backdrop of the time period Owen considers, and because regime change is not an accepted practice in international relations. The sheer number of cases tells us little about how "normal" a tool of statecraft regime change actually is if not put into perspective. In relative terms, regime change occurs roughly four times in ten years on average worldwide (one case every 2.39 years on average). Importantly, state engagement in regime change is not evenly distributed over time, but instead clustered in waves.<sup>111</sup> The United States, "the most prolific intervener in the international system since the end of World War II",<sup>112</sup> has engaged in twenty-five regime change interventions between 1899 and 2003 or, put differently, in roughly one

---

<sup>109</sup> Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 2.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>112</sup> Mark J. Mullenbach and Gerard P. Matthews, "Deciding to Intervene: An Analysis of International and Domestic Influences on United States Interventions in Intrastate Disputes," *International Interactions* 34, no. 1 (2008): 25. To be sure, Mullenbach and Matthews are not concerned with regime change strictly speaking, but deal with interventions more broadly defined as "diplomatic, economic, or military involvement by a third party in a political dispute between two states", *ibid.*, 49, fn. 41.

regime change intervention every four years on average.<sup>113</sup> Relative to the extensive time period Owen considers and to the use of other tools of foreign policy, like diplomacy, war, or economic sanctions, these numbers do not seem to qualify regime change as a routinized tool on a state's menu of foreign policy options. Second, irrespective of absolute or relative numbers of regime change interventions, the alleged normalcy of regime change is put into question by the fact that, as a state practice, regime change is not sanctioned by international law, making it extraordinarily difficult for states to publicly justify engagement in regime change and to use it as a habitual instrument of foreign policy. Especially the triangle of codified norms on sovereignty and non-intervention, the use of force, and the right to self-determination presents a formidable obstacle to regime change. Article 2.4 and 2.7 of the Charter of the United Nations proscribe the "threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state" (Art. 2.4) and establish a right to non-intervention by stipulating that "[n]othing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state" (Art. 2.7).<sup>114</sup> Article 42 and Article 51 of the UN Charter specify the conditions of legitimate use of force, i.e. maintaining and restoring "international peace and security" (Art. 42), and the "inherent right of individual or collective self-defense if an armed attack occurs" (Art. 51).<sup>115</sup> These basic principles governing interstate relations, however often violated in practice, preclude states from engaging in regime change habitually, at least since the end of World War II. In contrast to routinized foreign policy practices like diplomacy, regime change can therefore not be considered a "normal" tool of statecraft.

The existence of regime change in international politics, which is at once recurrent and non-habitual, presents an interesting puzzle. If regime change is a phenomenon larger than its arguably single most prominent manifestation, the 2003 invasion of Iraq, yet far from being a habitually used instrument of foreign policy, its recurrent pattern begs an explanation that neither underpredicts, nor overpredicts its prevalence. More specifically, how can we

---

<sup>113</sup> Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 22. By another count, the United States has engaged in twenty-two regime change operations since 1900. See Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations*, 115-116.

<sup>114</sup> "Charter of the United Nations", <https://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter1.shtml>, accessed on March 5, 2014. Note that one could argue that intervention in general and regime change in particular might actually proliferate precisely because Article 2.4 establishes a strong norm against conquest and thus makes regime change a plausible substitute for outright annexation [for such an argument, see Fazal, *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation*, 170-173]. To the extent to which other principles constrain and regulate external interference and the use of force, however, the international normative context strongly discourages both annexation and regime change.

<sup>115</sup> "Charter of the United Nations", <https://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml>, accessed on March 8, 2014.

explain the recurrent and century-long pattern of regime change activity of the "most prolific intervener", the United States, without arguing that regime change is either an anomalous or routinized feature of US foreign policy? The next section turns to the literature in search of answers to this study's research question.

## **Existing Explanations for the Recurrence of Regime Change**

### *Literature on Foreign-Imposed Regime Change*

Research that explicitly deals with regime change as the central phenomenon of interest belongs to a nascent strand of intervention research. While the term foreign-imposed regime change (FIRC) was used first by Suzanne Werner in her 1996 article on the probability of FIRC in the aftermath of war involvement,<sup>116</sup> regime change has gained growing attention as a subject of inquiry particularly since 9/11 and the subsequent US interventions in Afghanistan (2001) and Iraq (2003). Most FIRC studies, however, assess the consequences of regime change rather than its roots or purpose. By taking the practice of regime change as an analytic starting point, these studies typically examine the effects of FIRC on a range of different phenomena, focusing on international consequences such as the probability of interstate conflict,<sup>117</sup> regional peace,<sup>118</sup> or domestic consequences such as internal stability,<sup>119</sup> civil war,<sup>120</sup> and democratization.<sup>121</sup> Due to their interest in the consequences of FIRC, studies like these formulate assumptions about the recurrence of regime change rather than tackle the question head-on. Peic and Reiter, for instance, list several potential motives for the practice of FIRC: "[r]egime change is often imposed to remove an interstate threat, especially when an adversary is seen as implacably hostile and untrustworthy", a means of "safeguarding American national security", or a means to "advance foreign economic interests or spread ideology",<sup>122</sup> but offer no analysis of these potential explanations.

FIRC studies that focus on the underlying logic and sources of regime change are rare, but they exist. Suzanne Werner, for instance, examines the likelihood of regime change

---

<sup>116</sup> Suzanne Werner, "Absolute and Limited War: The Possibility of Foreign-Imposed Regime Change," *International Interactions* 22, no. 1 (1996).

<sup>117</sup> Nigel Lo, Barry Hashimoto, and Dan Reiter, "Ensuring Peace: Foreign-Imposed Regime Change and Postwar Peace Duration, 1914–2001," *International Organization* 62, no. 4 (2008).

<sup>118</sup> Andrew J. Enterline and J. Michael Greig, "Beacons of Hope? The Impact of Imposed Democracy on Regional Peace, Democracy, and Prosperity," *Journal of Politics* 67, no. 4 (2005).

<sup>119</sup> Andrew J. Enterline and J. Michael Greig, "Perfect Storms? Political Instability in Imposed Politics and the Futures of Iraq and Afghanistan," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52, no. 6 (2008).

<sup>120</sup> Peic and Reiter, "Foreign-Imposed Regime Change, State Power and Civil War Onset, 1920–2004."

<sup>121</sup> Bueno de Mesquita and Downs, "Intervention and Democracy.", Downs and Montan, "Forced to Be Free?: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization.", Meernik, "United States Military Intervention and the Promotion of Democracy."

<sup>122</sup> Peic and Reiter, "Foreign-Imposed Regime Change, State Power and Civil War Onset, 1920–2004," 453–455.

during wartime, arguing that the likelihood of a war participant suffering the loss of power through regime change depends on the opportunity and willingness of the war opponent to inflict this ultimate cost on the war participant. More precisely, opportunities for the war opponent negatively affecting the fate of the war participant are the participant's loss in war, high war costs, and relative military weakness compared to the war opponent. The opponent's willingness to impose a new regime increases with differences in authority structures of the belligerents, high war costs for the opponent, and the lack of domestic regime change during the war.<sup>123</sup> According to Werner, differences in authority structures are the key determinant of the opponent's willingness to impose regime change because "[e]xamples of different institutions and expectations in other states can undermine the strength and legitimacy of the very institutions and expectations which secure a leader's claim to power".<sup>124</sup> Alternative authority arrangements pose such a threat that leaders extend their political objectives in warfare, striving for the complete elimination of the war opponent's regime. Another study that examines the causes of regime change during wartime tests a variety of hypotheses and concludes that particularly three factors increase the likelihood of FIRC in wars: ideological tensions and differences in authority structures between the regime changer and the target state, unreliable personalist dictatorships causing commitment problems between the two states, and buffer states.<sup>125</sup>

The study of the causes of FIRC during wartime provides important insights, but has two fundamental limitations. First, it frames FIRC as a potential consequence of war and thus restricts its research findings to what John Owen calls "ex post promotions", i.e. cases of FIRC "in which the initial attack was for other reasons" than regime change itself and in which the "decision to use force to impose a regime may not have been made until *after* the attack [emphasis in original]".<sup>126</sup> By regarding FIRC as a potential byproduct of warfare or, in the words of Suzanne Werner, a consequence of "absolute war", these studies obscure the function and role of regime change. If regime change is by design seen as a potential consequence of interstate war, it cannot have a separate underlying logic other than the achievement of war aims broadly defined. Thus, cases of "ex ante promotions" in which force is used specifically to topple the regime of a target state, remain unexplored and unexplained. Second, the use of large-N datasets and statistical analyses in these studies produces results

---

<sup>123</sup> Werner, "Absolute and Limited War: The Possibility of Foreign-Imposed Regime Change," 72.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>125</sup> Downes, "The Causes of Foreign-Imposed Regime Change in Interstate Wars."

<sup>126</sup> Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 2; 32.

that convincingly show the probabilities of the occurrence of regime change during wartime, but cannot provide insights into FIRC's root causes or its role in the foreign policy of the regime changer. For instance, Alexander Downes plausibly shows that commitment problems between two states, such as when one state is ruled by an unreliable personalist dictatorship, makes the occurrence of FIRC more likely.<sup>127</sup> Why a state would seek to replace the regime of another state in the first place, however, is left unexplored. Thus, studying the enabling conditions of regime change is worthwhile in itself, but cannot provide satisfying insights into FIRC's role.

John Owen's work on the sources of regime change is to date perhaps the most elaborate and sophisticated. In his article on the foreign imposition of domestic institutions, Owen identifies temporal clusters of what he calls institutional promotion between 1555 and 1999 in which regime change was a particularly prevalent means of foreign policy. In doing so, he argues that regime promotion typically occurs in cases in which the target state suffers a civil war or has undergone some other form of domestic instability. Two other factors increasing the probability of regime change are the lack of international security and international tensions between competing ideologies.<sup>128</sup> Building on his survey of cases and clusters, Owen provides an elaborate explanation for regime change, explicitly covering both ex post and ex ante promotions. In his 2010 monograph on the topic, he identifies transnational ideological polarization defined as "the progressive segregation of elites and mass publics across states along an ideological axis"<sup>129</sup> as the main driving force behind regime change. In times of high ideological polarization, regime leaders strongly identify with a particular regime type or ideology and are thus more willing to engage in regime promotion or regime counter-promotion in order to roll back the influence of competing regime types and their pertinent state ideologies. Owen argues that high ideological polarization is a likely consequence of either a regime crisis in a target state or a great power war, both of which present opportunities to potential regime changers and what Owen calls "transnational ideological networks (TINs)" that are "organized around a common deep commitment to a particular political regime".<sup>130</sup>

As plausible as Owen's account centering on the important role of transnational ideological contest is, its explanatory power in explaining the foreign policy of regime

---

<sup>127</sup> Downes, "The Causes of Foreign-Imposed Regime Change in Interstate Wars," 39.

<sup>128</sup> Owen, "The Foreign Imposition of Domestic Institutions," 393-395.

<sup>129</sup> Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 37.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 32.

change is limited. To the extent that Owen treats regime change as an international outcome, analyzing macro-historical clusters of intensified regime promotion over long periods of time, his account falls short of offering a more fine-grained explanation for the foreign policy choices of particular countries. As he readily admits, his account cannot explain US interventions in the Western hemisphere in the beginning of the twentieth century and during the Cold War, because those interventions had little to do with the central hypothesized cause of his work during the twentieth century, i.e. a "long transnational contest among advocates of liberal democracy, communism, and fascism".<sup>131</sup> With Owen conceding that cases of US regime change in the early twentieth century, i.e. cases of one of the most prolific regime changer, are "not explained by the transnational ideological struggle among communism, fascism, and liberalism"<sup>132</sup>, i.e. by his favored account, we must turn to other strands of IR literature to learn more about the recurrence of regime change in the foreign policy of the United States.

### *Structural Explanations*

Structural theories have a long pedigree in international relations theory. Convinced that the structure of the international system "provides a set of constraints and opportunities within which individual groups and states seek to advance their interests"<sup>133</sup> and that the system "exhibits properties and behaviors that are different from those of the parts",<sup>134</sup> structural theories typically explain what Kenneth Waltz calls "international-political outcomes" with recourse to the nature and character of the structure of the international system.<sup>135</sup> Not all, but some of these theories try to account for state behavior, too. Focusing on the nature of the international system as the main driving force for intervention, Stanley Hoffmann for example argues that the proliferation of intervention depends on the homogeneity of the international system and the prevalence of mechanisms of international order. An international system is homogeneous as long as "all the units have the same principle of domestic legitimacy",<sup>136</sup> i.e. the same domestic political authority structure regulating state-society relations. Heterogeneous international systems facilitate the occurrence of

---

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 166. Trying to explain US intervention from 1900s through the 1930s, Owen resorts to what he calls a "more conventional economic-interest hypothesis".

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 165.

<sup>133</sup> Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 26.

<sup>134</sup> Robert Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 6.

<sup>135</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), 79.

<sup>136</sup> Stanley Hoffmann, "The Problem of Intervention," in *Intervention in World Politics*, ed. Hedley Bull (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 12.

intervention, as conflicting principles of domestic legitimacy lead to a violent clash, inviting mutual aggression and a struggle for ideological domination.<sup>137</sup> The second factor next to the homogeneity of the international system that facilitates intervention is, according to Hoffmann, the absence of a "mechanism of moderation" such as the balance of power, maintaining that the balance-of-power mechanism lowers the likelihood of intervention, but does not prevent it from occurring. Interestingly, Hoffmann characterizes the Cold War as an era without such a mechanism helping maintain international order, arguing that "in the periods of acute cold war [...], forms of intervention caused by the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union become countless".<sup>138</sup> Indeed, Hoffmann considers the post-World War II period as the most intervention-prone era among the historical eras in which interventions have proliferated, observing a "maelstrom of interventions around the mists of self-determination", fierce competition between democracy and totalitarianism, a number of belatedly colonial interventions, the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism, and finally splits in the communist world due to "rival versions of the totalitarian orthodoxy".<sup>139</sup>

According to Hans Morgenthau, there are additional factors pertaining to the international level that favor intervention. Discussing the first decades after the Second World War, he notes that the process of decolonization has given birth to new sovereign nations whose existence depends on foreign economic and financial aid. To the extent that this dependency on foreign aid is a "condition for their survival",<sup>140</sup> it represents a lever for intervention. Put more broadly, one could argue that power imbalances between great powers and lesser powers are an enabling condition for intervention. Second, the frequency of intervention is, according to Morgenthau, linked to domestic revolutions in that they portend a new orientation in a country's foreign policy, making great power interventions more likely. Another factor influencing the willingness of great powers to intervene in the domestic conflicts of weaker states is nuclear deterrence. Referring to the Cold War, Morgenthau argues that "the recognition on the part of the two superpowers, armed with a large arsenal of nuclear weapons, that a direct confrontation between them would entail unacceptable risks"

---

<sup>137</sup> Raymond Aron argues that the "homogeneity of the system favors the limitation of violence" because states "remain aware of their solidarity" and so "they incline to compromise". See Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations*, 2nd ed. (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2003 [1966]), 100. Note that this argument is similar to Suzanne Werner's discussed above about the likelihood of FIRC in case of differences in authority structures between two states. Werner, "Absolute and Limited War: The Possibility of Foreign-Imposed Regime Change."

<sup>138</sup> Hoffmann, "The Problem of Intervention," 18-19.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 15-16.

<sup>140</sup> Morgenthau, "To Intervene or Not to Intervene," 427.

makes them choose "to oppose and compete with each other surreptitiously through the intermediary of third parties", leading to proxy wars and intervention in weaker states.<sup>141</sup>

Arguments emphasizing the importance of the Cold War and, more generally, bipolarity for the prevalence of intervention are not uncontested. According to Stephen Brooks and William Wohlforth, there is indeed a link between the number of great powers in the international system and intervention, albeit a different one than Hoffmann and Morgenthau's. As part of their general argument about how systemic constraints inhibiting the freedom of action of the most powerful state in the system are inoperative in a condition of systemic unipolarity, Brooks and Wohlforth argue that intervention is more likely in unipolarity than bipolarity. As the unipole does not need to "factor in the prospect of military intervention by another great power", the lack of a counterbalancing constraint provides the unipole with opportunities for intervention that a great power confronted with another great power would not have under bipolarity. Comparing the 1991 Gulf War with the 1973 oil embargo, the authors argue that the United States did not militarily intervene in the Middle East following the 1973 oil embargo because of "the potential for direct or indirect Soviet intervention" as a "significant constraint on the use of American force".<sup>142</sup>

Arguments about the importance of structural factors for interventionist inclinations of particular states come in different shapes, focusing on alternative aspects of the international system like polarity or the homogeneity of the international system. What all of them have in common, however, is their inherent indeterminacy and empirical inadequacy. With regard to polarity, there are plausible arguments both for why bipolarity – combined with nuclear deterrence – and unipolarity should lead to more interventions, weakening the link between structural configurations and state behavior. Brooks and Wohlforth's argument about how unipolarity frees the unipole from systemic constraints, allowing it to intervene in foreign countries more freely, is an argument that is equally applicable to bipolarity: as Robert Jervis shows, one could argue that because bipolarity during the Cold War made the two superpowers more self-reliant and more independent from their allies, it gave them a "measure of independence and extra power that they could use as they saw fit", allowing them to pursue conflicts and engage in interventions where their own security was not at stake.<sup>143</sup> Following this argument, one could assume that bipolarity is equally prone to interventionist behavior on the part of two superpowers, but there are plausible arguments for

---

<sup>141</sup> Ibid., 428.

<sup>142</sup> Brooks and Wohlforth, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy*, 58.

<sup>143</sup> Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life*, 120.



why, under bipolarity, superpowers should have no interest in intervention, making the link between the international distribution of material power and intervention behavior indeterminate. As Kenneth Waltz maintains, we should not expect excessive interventionism under bipolarity precisely because superpowers are self-reliant and should therefore have little reason to worry about realignments of their weaker allies, "for third parties are not able to tilt the balance of power by withdrawing from one alliance or by joining the other".<sup>144</sup> While being theoretically indeterminate, arguments centering on the polarity of the international system fare no better in empirical terms: a brief look at the historical record of US regime change reveals a recurrent pattern of regime change that does not correlate with any particular distribution of power at the international level, as there are cases of US regime change during multipolarity, bipolarity, and unipolarity.

The heterogeneity of the international system as the second factor claimed to be important for the prevalence of interventions is more plausible inherently,<sup>145</sup> but finds no empirical support. Invoking the pre-1914 system as an example for the irrelevance of heterogeneity at the international level, Jervis shows that "the two countries whose sources of legitimacy were most different from each other – republican France and imperial Russia – allied because of external pressures".<sup>146</sup> The heterogeneity argument fares no better with respect to US regime change. One would expect, following the logic of the argument, that states engaged in regime change would promote regimes that are similar to their own authority structures, eliminating heterogeneity as the source of potential conflicts in the future. The empirical record, however, shows that the United States has engaged in regime changes "on behalf of authoritarianism" and that such support "provides numerous examples of state leaders promoting a regime type other than their own".<sup>147</sup> Thus, the heterogeneity argument accounts for little in the variation of regime types promoted and therefore cannot be empirically substantiated.

### *Democracy Promotion*

Turning to second-image factors, regime type and state identity are said to have an impact on intervention, specifically in the context of American foreign policy. Focusing on democracy promotion through force as a particular form of intervention, some argue that US liberalism

---

<sup>144</sup> Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 169.

<sup>145</sup> Note, however, that one could argue that the inclination of states to engage in intervention is actually not a consequence of the heterogeneity of the system, but rather of "the nature of particular regimes that produces the instability" and intervention. See Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life*, 100.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

<sup>147</sup> Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 165.

and democracy are root causes of American interventionism. At its core, this type of national identity has the conviction that the "American national experiment" and its historical experience are universally significant and applicable.<sup>148</sup> When it comes to foreign policy, this conviction generates what Mark Peceny calls a "cultural bias in favor of democracy".<sup>149</sup> Democracy promotion as the attempt at making other regimes more similar to the United States is thus seen as a significant outgrowth of the nature of American liberalism. A variant of why the United States promotes democracy in the world is offered by Tony Smith who agrees that democracy promotion has played a central role in American foreign policy, albeit for a different reason. Rather than being a consequence of the belief in the universality of the American experience, democracy promotion is, according to Smith, an expression of America's conception of national security which assumes that "a peaceful world order in which America could fully participate needed to be one constituted by democratic states".<sup>150</sup> The concern with the domestic order in other countries is thus a security concern: the impulse to spread democracy around the world stems from the belief that the nature of the regimes of other states is "hugely important for the attainment of American security and material interests".<sup>151</sup>

Arguments centering on the desire of the United States have the same problem as explanations invoking the heterogeneity of the international system as the main driving force for intervention: they cannot account for the variation in regime types that the US has promoted when engaged in regime change. For us to treat contradictory evidence as mere exceptions to the rule, there are too many cases in which the US has been either indifferent towards the complexion of the target state's new regime, or even decidedly opposed to democratic reforms. What is more, cases that do not feature any desire to promote democracy are not clustered and do not belong to particular periods: there is no indication of a desire to promote democracy in pre-1945 cases such as Nicaragua and in post-1945 like the Dominican Republic. Moreover, one could argue that cases that are typically treated as instances of democracy promotion are in reality driven by other considerations: in the 2003 Iraq War, for example, democracy promotion was a post-hoc justification for an invasion whose primary justification, i.e. weapons of mass destruction, became quickly obsolete due to the lack of confirmatory evidence. In sum, democracy promotion arguments vastly

---

<sup>148</sup> Gideon, "Democracy Promotion and American Foreign Policy: A Review Essay," 186.

<sup>149</sup> Peceny, *Democracy at the Point of Bayonets*, 3.

<sup>150</sup> Smith, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century*, 7.

<sup>151</sup> Ikenberry, "America's Liberal Grand Strategy: Democracy and National Security in the Post-War Era," 103.

exaggerates the causal importance of a potential desire to turn targeted states into democracies.

### *Rationalist Theories of War*

Another theoretical approach from which one can extract arguments about the recurrent pattern of regime change in US foreign policy is the rationalist theory of conflict, also called bargaining theory. Under the assumption that one can treat the question of regime change as a "subset of the broader question of the causes of war",<sup>152</sup> bargaining theory, which has been called the "dominant approach in conflict studies",<sup>153</sup> provides interesting insights into the use of regime change as a foreign policy. To explain the occurrence of war between two states, bargaining theory makes a number of assumptions: first, wars are always inefficient solutions to interstate disputes. Framed as a "failure of bargaining",<sup>154</sup> bargaining theory considers wars "costly because both sides must pay the costs of fighting, regardless of who wins, so there are fewer goods to distribute between the two sides after war than before".<sup>155</sup> Even if a state anticipates victory in war and deems the benefits of fighting higher than its costs, fighting still involves costs, making war a suboptimal solution to a dispute. In the words of James Fearon, the inherent inefficiency creates a puzzle: "what prevents states in a dispute from reaching an ex ante agreement that avoids the costs they know will be paid ex post if they go to war"?<sup>156</sup> The main intuition of bargaining theory is that "if the outcome of a war were obvious from the start, then the war itself could be avoided and this outcome could be instituted by peaceful means, avoiding the suffering and destruction of war".<sup>157</sup> Second, bargaining theory assumes not only that states are unitary actors, discounting causal factors pertinent to the domestic context,<sup>158</sup> but also that states are strictly rational. Going beyond the notion that states are intentionalist actors, strict rationality assumes that states "seek out and use all available information",<sup>159</sup> constantly updating prior beliefs and estimates about an

---

<sup>152</sup> Dueck, "Neoclassical Realism and the National Interest: Presidents, Domestic Politics, and Major Military Interventions," 140.

<sup>153</sup> David A. Lake, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," *International Security* 35, no. 3 (2011): 7-8.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>155</sup> Dan Reiter, "Exploring the Bargaining Model of War," *Perspective on Politics* 1, no. 1 (2003): 29.

<sup>156</sup> James D. Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization* 49, no. 3 (1995): 383-384.

<sup>157</sup> Lilach Gilady and Bruce Russett, "Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution," in *Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth A. Simmons (London: SAGE, 2002), 396. Put differently, Lake maintains that war "is an inefficient outcome that all parties would avoid in the absence of bargaining imperfections", see Lake, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," 10.

<sup>158</sup> Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," 379.

<sup>159</sup> Lake, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," 9.

opponent's military strength and intentions. Assuming that two actors have the same information about an issue, they should arrive at the same beliefs.<sup>160</sup>

Based on these two central assumptions – wars as inefficient outcomes and states as rational actors – bargaining theory suggests three possible reasons why states might go to war despite its costliness. First, wars become possible due to the incentive of state to willingly misrepresent their resolve and military capabilities, deciding not to reveal private information about these factors in negotiations.<sup>161</sup> Even rational actors might thus decide to wage war if they cannot correctly assess the likelihood of military victory and the degree to which the other state is willing to make concessions. Second, wars become possible because of commitment problems. Despite the notion that a negotiated settlement to a dispute is inherently more efficient than fighting, states might choose to wage war if the opponent cannot credibly commit not to attack in the future. The higher skepticism towards the enforcement of a potentially more efficient negotiated settlement is, the higher is the incentive to resort to war.<sup>162</sup> In theory, there is a third possible cause of war. If the issue in dispute is "indivisible or cannot be the object of an intermediate settlement",<sup>163</sup> rational actors might arrive at the conclusion that fighting a war might be the optimal choice. While "logically tenable", this third rationalist explanation for war is usually discounted because, as Fearon argues, most international disputes can be made divisible through "side-payments or linkages with other issues".<sup>164</sup>

While bargaining theory presents rigorous and inherently consistent arguments about the causes of war, its assumptions frame the puzzle of war in ways that inevitably lead to an debilitating inability to find empirical support for the arguments postulated. First, by considering war a bargaining failure and an inefficient outcome inherently inferior to a negotiated settlement, bargaining theory dramatically underestimates the attractiveness of the use of force. While James Fearon claims that war is always inefficient *ex post* unless "states enjoy the activity of fighting for its own sake, as a consumption good",<sup>165</sup> the use of force can in fact be a highly attractive option and a perfectly rational strategy if its costs are not borne by those who decide to wage war. That foreign policy elites can to a high degree insulate themselves from the costs of war is conveniently overlooked, with bargaining theory pretending, especially in its unitary-actor variant, that the public does not have to bear the

---

<sup>160</sup> Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," 392.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, 400.

<sup>162</sup> Reiter, "Exploring the Bargaining Model of War," 30.

<sup>163</sup> Lake, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," 11.

<sup>164</sup> Fearon, "Rationalist Explanations for War," 381-382.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 383.

brunt of the costs in blood and treasure. As the 2003 invasion of Iraq shows, even the exorbitant costs of fighting, 50 billion dollars according to the Bush administration's own estimate and three trillion dollars actually incurred,<sup>166</sup> did little to deter the President from engaging in a large-scale military invasion. Second, while bargaining theory assumes that most disputes can be made divisible, it is hardly conceivable how bargaining and a peaceful settlement could replace the use of force when the ultimate goal of one state is the overthrow of the other state's regime. David Lake argues that even when one state seeks regime change, the set of bargaining solutions to the dispute need not be empty because the leader of the targeted state could simply concede everything to the potential regime changer. In the case of regime change in Iraq, Saddam Hussein "could have fled Iraq and sought exile in some safe haven" to prevent war.<sup>167</sup> Yet, Lake's argument is hardly convincing: apart from the fact that complete surrender can hardly be called bargaining, conceding everything to the opponent is not reconcilable with the assumption of rationality, which leads us to the third and most important weakness of bargaining theory: actors do not act in accordance with the assumption of strict rationality. Assessing the viability of bargaining theory in the case of US regime change in Iraq, David Lake readily admits that "the most severe challenge to bargaining theory arises from the cognitive and decision-making biases that were so evident in the Bush administration and Saddam and his regime".<sup>168</sup> Rather than updating prior beliefs with new information, leaders oftentimes stick to their initial beliefs and even disregard conflicting evidence. Provided with the same information, different leaders assess the behavior of foreign leaders differently. Commitment problems, a major cause of war in bargaining theory, remain constant across many disputes, yet leaders opt for war in some, but try to strive for negotiated settlement in others.<sup>169</sup> In sum, bargaining theory provides little in the way of accounting for the use of regime change.

## Conclusion

This chapter has conceptualized regime change for the purpose of this study, and argued that existing explanations do not fully account for the recurrent, yet non-habitual pattern of regime change in US foreign policy. Large-N studies on foreign-imposed regime change deal only with ex post promotions rather than ex ante promotions, solely focusing on FIRC during

---

<sup>166</sup> Lake, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," 17-18.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>169</sup> As David Lake concedes with respect to the 2003 Iraq War, "the commitment problem was a constant under the Clinton and Bush administrations". See *ibid.*, 25.

wartime. Structural explanations focusing on the international distribution of material power and the heterogeneity of the system are indeterminate at a theoretical level, failing to specify links between structural factors and interventionist behavior, and find little support at the empirical level, being unable to account for the persistence of regime change across different systemic constellations in terms of polarity and heterogeneity. Arguments centering on a desire to promote democracy fare no better empirically, being defied by the variation in the regime types promoted by the United States, ranging from democracy promotion to democracy prevention. Finally, rationalist theories of war take actors' rationality and the inefficiency of war for granted, blinding us towards empirical evidence that is in clear conflict with such assumptions. Other arguments like defensive and offensive realism as well economic-interest arguments cannot be refuted at the cross-case level and will therefore be examined separately as alternative explanations in the empirical part of this study. To overcome the limitations of existing explanations, the following chapter will present a novel argument about the pattern of US regime change, one that is focused on the emotional frustration experienced by leading US foreign policymakers.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Role of Emotional Frustration in Regime Change

How can we explain the pattern of regime change in US foreign policy? In trying to account for the practice of regime change, this chapter lays out the core claims of this study, focusing on the emotional state of leading US foreign policymakers. It argues that the practice of regime change is predicated upon what I call 'emotional frustration', an anger-arousing emotional state that is brought about by a foreign leader's obstructive behavior perceived to be rooted in hatred and irredeemable hostility. While obstruction is ubiquitous in interstate interactions, I claim that the combination of prior hegemonic expectations towards a given target state and the perception of hatred play an important role in influencing the extent to which a foreign leader's conduct evokes an emotional response on the part of foreign policy elites. Once emotionally frustrated, regime change becomes an attractive foreign policy instrument to decision-makers who seek a way to confront and put a stop to the obstruction of a menacing foreign leader. Rather than a strategic response to threats to wealth or security, factors commonly assumed to be decisive in intervention decisions,<sup>170</sup> regime change has thus frequently been spurred by hegemonic expectations and obstructions perceived to be rooted in deep hatred.

The focus on emotional frustration as a driver of regime change must look odd to most of IR literature. After all, decision makers are typically portrayed as strategic calculators of costs and benefits. Aggressive behavior, while possible, can seemingly only be the result of a cold and careful weighing of costs and potential benefits.<sup>171</sup> If emotions play any role in explaining behavior, they are widely assumed to be found in regions that are far from an asserted Western heartland of rationality, regions that, hardly coincidentally, are the site of contested and sometimes violent political interactions with the United States and its Western allies. Prevalent at the beginning of the twentieth century when leading US policymakers viewed "tropical peoples as suffering from a 'female' inability to make rational decisions about government or the economy",<sup>172</sup> the notion that such regions are inhabited by people

---

<sup>170</sup> Peic and Reiter, "Foreign-Imposed Regime Change, State Power and Civil War Onset, 1920-2004," 453.

<sup>171</sup> This is what Mearsheimer calls "calculated aggression", arguing that "great powers are not mindless aggressors so bent on gaining power that they charge headlong into losing wars or pursue Pyrrhic victories", see Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 37.

<sup>172</sup> Cyrus Veaser, "The Platt Amendment and U.S. Occupation Policies in Latin America," in *The Routledge Handbook of American and Diplomatic History*, ed. Christos Frentzos and Antonio S. Thompson (New York: Routledge, 2013), 55.

whose decisions are emotional and based on passionate impulses, is still popular. Henry Kissinger, for example, regarded most of non-Western foreign policy as influenced not by "clear, objective rational interests but rather by opaque, internal, and irrational cultural desires and emotions".<sup>173</sup> More recently, the Middle East has been characterized as a region in which "widespread disaffection, disillusionment, anger, resentment, frustration, humiliation, and a range of other powerful emotions that infect the population as a collective" reign supreme, making "the people of the Muslim Middle East [...] a very angry lot".<sup>174</sup> If emotions are an "infection", a depiction running counter to how emotions are dealt with here, I will show that their domain extends from the Middle East and other non-Western regions straight to the heart of the United States' foreign policymaking community.

The argument presented here attributes a central role to the extent to which US leaders feel emotionally frustrated with target states' leaders, an emotional state that has repeatedly characterized their turn to regime change. It should be noted that the relationship between emotional frustration and regime change is not deterministic enough to be considered what Carl Hempel famously called a "general law" or "universal hypothesis".<sup>175</sup> While regime change as a specific foreign policy tool has a higher likelihood to be used in response to emotional frustration, I do not argue that emotionally frustrated state leaders will always choose forcible regime change from the vast menu of their foreign policy options – because other courses of action such as covert CIA operations or economic sanctions rather than regime change might equally be the result of frustration – nor that every instance of regime change can be reduced to the behavioral implications of frustration. In this sense, I agree with others who have noted that "the world is too fraught with contingency" for us to be able to "provide a complete list of necessary and sufficient conditions for forcible regime promotion".<sup>176</sup> This notwithstanding, I do claim that the close study of the history of US regime change decisions reveals some hitherto overlooked patterns of emotional frustration that have again and again animated regime change interventions.

---

<sup>173</sup> Saurette, "You Dissin Me? Humiliation and Post 9/11 Global Politics," 499.

<sup>174</sup> Kenneth Pollack, *A Path Out of the Desert: A Grand Strategy for America in the Middle East* (New York: Random House, 2008), 120.

<sup>175</sup> Hempel uses both terms interchangeably, referring to them if "[i]n every case where an event of a specified kind C occurs at a certain place and time, an event of a specified kind E will occur at a place and time which is related in a specified manner to the place and time of the occurrence of the first event". See Carl G. Hempel, "The Function of General Laws in History," *Journal of Philosophy* 39, no. 2 (1942). For an excellent discussion of the significance of Hempel's theory of historical inquiry, see Marc Trachtenberg, *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 1-7.

<sup>176</sup> Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 7.



The outline of the chapter is as follows: the next section presents the core claims of this study by first discussing the role of emotion in international relations scholarship. It shows that emotions, particularly fear, play an important, yet implicit role in the theoretical apparatus of a number of prominent IR theories and in the conceptualization of the security dilemma. The chapter then turns to the definition of emotion by canvassing a range of debates. It argues that emotion and rationality need not be irreconcilable, that experiencing emotion requires cognitive appraisal, and that emotions have important behavioral implications, also called action tendencies, that make them worthy subjects of inquiry. The following section conceptualizes the main explanatory factor of this study, i.e. emotional frustration. It argues that emotional frustration is sub-type of frustration, with frustration broadly defined as exhibiting two central attributes: preexisting expectations and an obstruction. What sets emotional frustration apart from other types of frustration, so the section argues, is its anger-arousing quality. Next, I turn to expectations and make a distinction between hegemonic and non-hegemonic expectations, arguing that hegemonic expectations enhance the frustration potential of foreign policymakers, as relatively more target state actions might constitute obstruction. The following section shows that the difference between emotional and non-emotional frustration is predicated upon the perception of obstruction, arguing that perceived hatred, surprise, and deliberateness have a high chance of triggering an angry response on the part of the frustrated individual. Next, I present two arguments – one instrumental and one non-instrumental – for why regime change as a type of aggression is an attractive option for emotionally frustrated policymakers. The chapter closes with a discussion of the operationalization of frustration. After pointing to the pitfalls of the quantitative analysis of operational codes, i.e. its problematic equating of beliefs with emotions and its lack of attention to context, I argue that a qualitative analysis of private discourse and reliance on the self-reporting of emotion is a viable strategy to identify emotional frustration.

### **Explaining US-Imposed Regime Change – The Role of Emotional Frustration**

How can we solve the enigma of regime change as a recurrently used instrument of long-standing tradition in US foreign policy? Stressing the behavioral implications of emotions, this study looks at the emotional state of leading foreign policymakers. Through case studies across the twentieth century, it uncovers the repeated way in which emotional frustration has framed and animated decisions to engage in regime change. Before subsequent sections of the

chapter explicate the main argument, the following section presents how emotions have been dealt with in IR and what they are.

### *Emotions in IR*

Emotions have an odd existence in IR scholarship. On the one hand, they have received little systematic research despite being an empirically ubiquitous phenomenon in world politics.<sup>177</sup> Only recently have scholars started to turn to emotion-based factors in their theoretical explanations, reacting to the growing recognition that the realm of international politics and its fundamental issues like war, nationalism, and identity are strongly infused with emotions.<sup>178</sup> On the other hand, emotions have always featured in the conceptual apparatus of many influential IR theories, even if only implicitly. Critics might suspect this to be the case for rather marginal phenomena, but it in fact holds true for fundamental concepts such the security dilemma, "a vicious circle of security and power accumulation" triggered by the cumulative effects of the desire for more security,<sup>179</sup> or simply put "the tendency for efforts to increase a state's security to decrease the security of others".<sup>180</sup> With regard to the sources of the security dilemma, Arnold Wolfers points to the implications of fear, a prominent emotion,<sup>181</sup> as a potential reason why statesmen pursue "the will-o'-the-wisp of absolute security".<sup>182</sup> Discussing potential, unintended consequences of foreign policy strategies based on fear, Hans Morgenthau similarly shows that being fearful of the potentially malign and revisionist intentions of other states can prompt states to resort to defensive measures like military build-ups and higher military spending, which in turn can be interpreted as offensive in nature by other states, setting off a security dilemma in which all sides become "enmeshed in mutual fear and engage in an arms race which seeks to still those fears". Thus, it is fear, perhaps the most common emotion-based background assumption to realist IR theories, that according to Morgenthau "creates imperialism where there is none".<sup>183</sup> Neta Crawford

---

<sup>177</sup> Neta C Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships," *International Security* 24, no. 4 (2000).

<sup>178</sup> Roland Bleiker and Emma Hutchison, "Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics," *Review of International Studies* 34, no. 1 (2008): 115-116.

<sup>179</sup> John H. Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics* 2, no. 2 (1950): 157.

<sup>180</sup> Jervis, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life*, 60.

<sup>181</sup> Richard Ned Lebow defines fear as "the opposite of confidence" and as "associated with danger, which is the approach of something terrible". See Richard Ned Lebow, *Why Nations Fight: Past and Future Motives for War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 85.

<sup>182</sup> Arnold Wolfers, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1962), 84.

<sup>183</sup> Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 3rd revised ed. (New York: Knopf, 1962 [1948]), 82.

therefore correctly observes that "the concept of a security dilemma pivots on [pessimistic] perceptions of intention, not reality".<sup>184</sup>

Among the many examples of IR theories that rely on the logic of the security dilemma and on implicit emotion-based background assumptions, two deserve special mentioning. Despite the predominance of the rational-actor paradigm, viewed by Neta Crawford an important reason for why IR theory has "lately tended to ignore explicit considerations of 'the passions'",<sup>185</sup> even theories which explicitly subscribe to the assumption of rationality cannot entirely do away with emotions. John Mearsheimer's version of realism is a prominent case in point. The main argument of offensive realism that great powers maximize power and behave offensively in order to ensure survival, rests entirely on the assumption that international anarchy, offensive military capabilities, and uncertainty about other states' intentions – three of Mearsheimer's five "bedrock assumptions"<sup>186</sup> – inevitably create fear among great powers. This fear, which Mearsheimer calls a "motivating force in world politics",<sup>187</sup> is an emotional state without which his main theoretical claims, i.e. offensive foreign policy behavior and power maximization, would not logically follow. Though Mearsheimer's model would be seriously compromised if one were to take the emotion of fear out of the equation, he does not deal with the concept of fear, its nature, causes and consequences in a theoretically informed and conscious manner. This is all the more surprising given that the notion that states are fundamentally driven by an emotion as extreme as fear, seems in need of an explanation for why it can be deemed reconcilable with the kind of rationality as strategic decision-making that Mearsheimer assumes great powers adopt in their dealings with each other.<sup>188</sup>

A second example of a theory implicitly relying on emotions is Tanisha Fazal's theory of state death. Her argument that the unfavorable position of buffer states, i.e. states that "are geographically located between two other states engaged in a rivalry",<sup>189</sup> makes them more vulnerable to the loss of their foreign policy making power than non-buffer states, hinges entirely upon the premise that the two rivals fear each other. What Fazal calls the "strategic imperative to take over" the buffer state is a consequence of her taking for granted the notion that each of the two rivals fears that the other would take over the buffer at their expense if they did not do so first: "[e]ven if each rival knows that its opponent would prefer to avoid

---

<sup>184</sup> Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships," 133.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 116.

<sup>186</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 30-32.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>189</sup> Fazal, "State Death in the International System," 321.

war, neither can be certain that this preference will dominate the strategic imperatives facing the rivals".<sup>190</sup> Again, despite lacking detailed theorizing, it is the prominent emotion of fear that drives the strategic calculus of states according to Fazal's theory. In trying to do justice to the important role of emotions in world politics by bringing it to the fore, the argument presented in the following sections deals with the behavioral implications of one particular emotion – emotional frustration – in a more systematic and theoretically informed way.

### *What is Emotion?*

An important reason for the confusion surrounding the role of emotion in international politics is the lack of consensus regarding how emotion should be defined. Depending on theoretical orientations, disciplinary commitments, and research purposes, scholars have conceptualized emotion in manifold ways. At a very general level that is agnostic to the specificities of the causes and consequence of emotion, Neta Crawford defines emotions as "inner states that individuals describe to others as feelings" which may (or may not) be "associated with biological, cognitive, and behavioral states and changes".<sup>191</sup> Crawford's inclusive definition of emotion zooms in on what she considers its most important characteristic, i.e. its subjective nature. Yet, even this highly abstract conceptualization reveals a potentially biased commitment to the notion that only inner states which individuals are able to represent and communicate to others, qualify as emotion, leaving out instances in which such inner states remain unconscious and hence non-representable. In view of contested conceptual demarcations between emotion and related phenomena, one could argue that Crawford's definition captures feelings rather than emotions, if feelings are defined as mental representations or "the perception of an emotional state".<sup>192</sup> This example shows, if nothing else, that defining emotion requires a careful discussion of a number of questions, such as how emotion relates to rationality and appraisal, as well as a discussion about the behavioral implications of emotion. Before turning to emotional frustration, the specific type of emotion subjected to inquiry in this study, the following will canvass each of the foregoing issues.

First, the relationship between emotion and rationality needs to be specified. The extent to which these two concepts are considered to be intertwined or distinct has a heavy

---

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., 314.

<sup>191</sup> Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships," 125.

<sup>192</sup> Antonio R. Damasio, "Emotions and Feelings: A Neurological Perspective," in *Feelings and Emotions: The Amsterdam Symposium*, ed. Antony S.R. Manstead, Nico Frijda, and Agneta Fischer (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 52. Note that Damasio employs a biologically-grounded and thus more restrictive definition of emotion, stressing that emotions are bioregulatory reactions as a "patterned collection of chemical and neural responses" to an "emotionally competent stimulus", *ibid.*, 50.

bearing upon how we come to understand the nature of emotion. A prominent way of dealing with the relationship is to define them in strict opposition to each other, stipulating that behavior can only be rational if it is not emotional. Defined this way, "the emotions encompass all those internalized impulses that may lead a person to override his or her material self-interest".<sup>193</sup> If rationality is the pursuit of self-interest, as is commonly assumed<sup>194</sup> and exemplified by Russell Hardin's definition of rational action as doing "what you believe serves your interest",<sup>195</sup> emotion and rationality are at odds with each other. Indeed, the purported opposition and irreconcilability of emotion and rationality has, often with normative overtones against the influence of emotion on behavior, a long tradition going back to Plato who believed that emotions undermined "the sovereign dignity of reason".<sup>196</sup> Aristotle, Descartes and Kant, among other thinkers, "viewed emotion as inimical to reason".<sup>197</sup> Echoing the belief in the distorting effects of emotion on rationality, scholars of political psychology similarly argue that emotions lead to deviations from a rational baseline. Robert Jervis, for example, argues that actors are not free of misjudgment because of the existence of cognitive misperceptions and emotions.<sup>198</sup>

In a move against the strict divide of emotion and rationality, scholars have more recently begun to conceptualize the relationship in more complex ways. Rose McDermott argues that emotions are integral to rationality in that they inform preference formation. Building on recent neuroscientific evidence, she maintains that "rationality, as we understand it, often requires emotional processing first".<sup>199</sup> Jonathan Mercer supports the view that emotion and rationality are not dichotomous, but rather causally linked, arguing that emotion is essential and necessary to rational decision-making.<sup>200</sup> Arguing that "emotions help form and strengthen beliefs" and that "emotion and cognition are not contrasting modes of thought

---

<sup>193</sup> Jack Hirshleifer, "The Affections and the Passions: Their Economic Logic," *Rationality and Society* 5, no. 2 (1993): 185.

<sup>194</sup> To be sure, Hirshleifer argues that [a]ctions motivated by the affections, while running counter to strict self-interest, need not be inconsistent with rationality. In that case, they are "in effect a trick played on us by Nature", ensuring that "our material goals are [...] achieved when they are not intentionally pursued, *ibid.*, 186. Note that this definition of rationality is notably broader than one which equates rationality with the pursuit of self-interest.

<sup>195</sup> Russell Hardin, *One for All: The Logic of Group Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 46.

<sup>196</sup> George E. Marcus, "The Psychology of Emotion and Politics," in *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* ed. David O. Sears, Leonie Huddy, and Robert Jervis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 183.

<sup>197</sup> Jonathan Mercer, "Human Nature and the First Image: Emotion in International Politics," *Journal of International Relations and Development* 9, no. 3 (2006): 290.

<sup>198</sup> Robert Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

<sup>199</sup> Rose McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality: The Meaning of Neuroscientific Advances for Political Science," *Perspectives on Politics* 2, no. 4 (2004): 693.

<sup>200</sup> Mercer, "Human Nature and the First Image: Emotion in International Politics," 294-295. See also Jon Elster, *Alchemies of the Mind: Rationality and the Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 287-298.

but rather intertwined processes", Frank Costigliola maintains that the "assumption of a clear-cut opposition between the rational and the emotional says more [...] about traditional Western concepts about the division of mind and body than it does about the actual nature of thought".<sup>201</sup> This reconceptualization of the relationship between rationality and emotion finds support and is informed by recent developments in neuroscience where pioneers like Antonio Damasio argue that the neural mechanisms for emotion and rational thoughts are not separate, but rather intertwined.<sup>202</sup> Drawing on this insight, one author argues that the "brain does not distinguish between cognitive and emotional thought, between concluding that Wednesday follows Tuesday or that rape is repugnant",<sup>203</sup> another that there is no physiological difference "between believing that  $2 + 2 = 4$  or that torture is evil".<sup>204</sup>

This study agrees with the more recent view that emotion is, in a fundamental sense, necessary for rationality in that it constitutes interests and desires. Critiquing the conventional view that emotion compromises rationality, Jonathan Mercer shows perhaps most compellingly that people "who are 'free' of emotion are irrational".<sup>205</sup> Yet, to the extent to which specific emotions affect the cost-benefit calculus of decision-makers, emotions have behavioral implications that, depending on how narrowly one defines rationality, might very well be considered irrational. Focusing on the role of emotions in forming beliefs rather than on the effects of specific emotions like fear or anger, Mercer concedes that though "incomplete", "[a] focus on the distorting power of emotion is not wrong", admitting that the action tendencies of specific emotions can upset the cost-benefit calculus of actors.<sup>206</sup> When Mercer argues that "[e]motion can contribute to irrational beliefs and self-destructive behavior",<sup>207</sup> he leaves the possibility open that emotions do not only affect behavior through constituting fundamental beliefs like trust, nationalism, justice or credibility, which is his central argument, but that they can also have a more immediate impact on behavior through upsetting a strategic cost-benefit calculus. This immediate impact can cause an action to be irrational if rationality is defined as the strict pursuit of self-interest. If, on the other hand, an actor's motivations are conceptually broadened, rendering rationality agnostic towards the

---

<sup>201</sup> Frank Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 441.

<sup>202</sup> Antonio R. Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Avon Books, 1994), 127-128. See also Jonathan Mercer, "Rationality and Psychology in International Politics," *International Organization* 59, no. 1 (2005): 93.

<sup>203</sup> Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War*, 441.

<sup>204</sup> Jonathan Mercer, "Emotional Beliefs," *International Organization* 64, no. 01 (2010): 5.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

specifics of pursued goals, rationality and emotion need not be in conflict with each other. Such a definition is offered by Jon Elster who regards an action as rational as long as it is the result of three optimal decisions in terms of means to achieve an actor's goals and beliefs based on available and optimally collected evidence. Not only does Elster leave the substantive content of goals and desires conceptually unspecified, he explicitly points out that they are the likely consequence of the passions.<sup>208</sup> Thus defined, action based on the pursuit of an emotion-triggered desire is rational as long as that desire is pursued in an instrumentally rational way, i.e. with optimal means, optimally grounded beliefs, and optimally collected evidence.

Second, mindful of the debate about the relationship between the appraisal view of emotion, which assumes that cognition precedes the experience of emotion, and the counterview, which assumes physiological sources of emotion, treating cognition as following rather than preceding emotion, this paper assumes that the experience of emotion involves appraisal. Rather than being a straightforward physiological response to an outside stimulus, emotions arise after some cognitive appraisal of the latter. In the words of one of the leading proponents of the appraisal view of emotion, the role of cognitive appraisal is "to mediate the relationship between the person and the environment", which means that "the way one interprets one's plight at any given moment is crucial to the emotional response".<sup>209</sup> This view critiques the James-Lange theory about the origin of emotions, which posits that physiological arousal instigates emotions without the mediation of cognition, and goes back to its earliest formulation by William Cannon who critiqued the unmediated relationship between an outside stimulus and the emotional response postulated by William James.<sup>210</sup> The reason why the appraisal view emphasizes the role of cognition in experiencing emotion is the human nature assumption that "humans are meaning-oriented, meaning-creating creatures who constantly evaluate events from the perspective of their well-being".<sup>211</sup> As such, a person's "appraisals, beliefs, and coping styles"<sup>212</sup> play a central role in the experience of emotion in that they determine whether or not an outside stimulus will lead to an emotional response. Since a "creature that is oblivious to the significance of what is happening for its

---

<sup>208</sup> Jon Elster, *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 30-31.

<sup>209</sup> Richard S. Lazarus, "Thoughts on the Relations Between Emotion and Cognition," *American Psychologist* 37, no. 9 (1982): 1019.

<sup>210</sup> Walter B. Cannon, "The James-Lange Theory of Emotions: A Critical Examination and an Alternative Theory," *American Journal of Psychology* 39, no. 1/4 (1927).

<sup>211</sup> Lazarus, "Thoughts on the Relations Between Emotion and Cognition," 1020.

<sup>212</sup> Ruth Leys, "The Turn to Affect: A Critique," *Critical Inquiry* 37, no. 3 (2011): 470.

well-being does not react with an emotion", for an emotional response to occur "people must comprehend [...] that their well-being is implicated in a transaction, for better or worse".<sup>213</sup>

To be sure, arguing that cognition is a constitutive element of emotion does not mean that the experience of emotion is "purely cognitive in form, pale, colorless, destitute of emotional warmth", as William James, one of the earlier critics of the appraisal view, suggested.<sup>214</sup> While James convincingly argued that bodily expressions are part and parcel of emotion, a view succinctly represented by his statement that a "purely disembodied human emotion is a nonentity"<sup>215</sup> and generally not opposed by appraisal theorists,<sup>216</sup> his assertion that the inclusion of cognition would confine emotion "entirely to the intellectual realm" stems from a narrow conceptualization of cognition that practically equates the concept with rationality. This equation, however, is hard to support, given that appraisal is neither a necessarily deliberate process, nor rational in the sense of adequately reflecting reality.<sup>217</sup> Cognition is thus better defined as "nothing more than 'concerned with receiving and processing information'" rather than implying "the presence of elaborate calculation, of computation, or even of reflexive self-awareness".<sup>218</sup>

Third, emotions are important for understanding decision-making because they have behavioral implications. To the extent that the experience of emotion is typically linked to action tendencies, understanding emotions helps us understand human behavior. Defined as "states of readiness to execute a given kind of action", action tendencies are so closely linked to emotion that some even consider them constitutive of emotion in that "[e]motions are tendencies to establish, maintain, or disrupt a relationship with the environment, or simply that "[e]motions are action tendencies".<sup>219</sup> Specific emotions excite individuals to specific actions. Fear, envy, shame, guilt, anger, hatred all have action tendencies, but these vary from emotion to emotion.<sup>220</sup> What these emotions have in common is that their action tendencies are not merely dispositions, but rather "actual, embodied states, or states on the verge of

---

<sup>213</sup> Richard S. Lazarus, "On the Primacy of Cognition," *American Psychologist* 39, no. 2 (1984): 124. For a defense of the James-Lange theory, see Andrew A.G. Ross, "Coming in from the Cold: Constructivism and Emotions," *European Journal of International Relations* 12, no. 2 (2006): 200-204.

<sup>214</sup> William James, "What is an Emotion?," *Mind* 9, no. 34 (1884): 190.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, 194.

<sup>216</sup> Richard Lazarus acknowledges that "somatic disturbances" are a central element of emotion. See Lazarus, "Thoughts on the Relations Between Emotion and Cognition," 1019.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, 1022.

<sup>218</sup> Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 23.

<sup>219</sup> Nico H. Frijda, *The Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 70-71.

<sup>220</sup> Elster, *Alchemisties of the Mind: Rationality and the Emotions*, 281-282.



embodiment in action, to be released when circumstances permit".<sup>221</sup> To be sure, that emotion "constitutes interests and causes behavior" does not mean that "emotion drives all behavior", which Jonathan Mercer calls the "'black hole' approach to emotion".<sup>222</sup> Taking the behavioral implications of the experience of emotion seriously is important to understand a range of phenomena in international relations, but one should not assume that emotion in and of itself provides a complete explanation for every type of action. On the basis of this discussion, the next section will turn to a particular emotion: emotional frustration.

### *Conceptualizing Emotional Frustration*

Emotional frustration is the central explanatory factor of the theoretical argument presented here. As with many other emotions, however, there is generally little agreement regarding what frustration means or how it should be conceptualized, leaving the term "often enshrouded in ambiguity".<sup>223</sup> Predominantly used in and stemming from the disciplines of sociology and psychology, the literature in these two fields offers a number of varying definitions. At the most basic level, frustration can be understood either as an external obstruction or as an individual's response to an obstruction.<sup>224</sup> Reflected in everyday language, we say something frustrated somebody's plans when we refer to the former definition of frustration, but that someone feels frustrated when referring to the latter. While an early and widely influential conceptualization in psychology adopts the former view, considering frustration an obstruction and defining it as "an interference with the occurrence of an instigated goal-response",<sup>225</sup> frustration can be conceptualized in a way that accommodates both elements of stimulus and response, as shown by Steuart Britt and Sidney Janus who consider frustration a process constituting a "frustrating situation", a "frustrated organism", and a "frustrated reactional system".<sup>226</sup> This comprehensive definition does not reduce frustration to obstruction, but instead brings together its three constitutive elements, i.e. the occurrence of obstruction as stimulus, its effect on the individual feeling frustrated, and the individual's response, providing the basic framework for this study's conceptualization.

---

<sup>221</sup> Nico H. Frijda, *The Laws of Emotion* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007), 27.

<sup>222</sup> Mercer, "Human Nature and the First Image: Emotion in International Politics," 294.

<sup>223</sup> Leonard Berkowitz, "Whatever Happened to the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis?," *American Behavioral Scientist* 21, no. 5 (1978): 692.

<sup>224</sup> Leonard Berkowitz, *Aggression: Its Causes, Consequences, and Control* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993), 31, Steuart H. Britt and Sidney Q. Janus, "Criteria of Frustration," *Psychological Review* 47, no. 5 (1940): 453.

<sup>225</sup> John Dollard et al., *Frustration and Aggression* (London: Butler & Tanner, 1939), 5.

<sup>226</sup> Britt and Janus, "Criteria of Frustration," 453. This conceptualization is in line with the appraisal view of emotion insofar as the latter is an example of what Martha Nussbaum calls the "stimulus-organism-response" model. See Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions*, 94.

For the purpose of this study, I define emotional frustration as *an anger-arousing emotional state brought about by an obstruction of preexisting expectations that is perceived to be based on irredeemable hatred and hostility*. As such, emotional frustration is a sub-type of frustration writ large, defined as the impact on an individual, both anger-arousing and otherwise, of an obstruction of that individual's preexisting expectations. Frustration in its wider sense encompasses all cases in which an individual's expectations are obstructed, regardless of whether or not the obstruction provokes an emotional response, whereas emotional frustration captures the subset of cases that feature emotional arousal. The structure of the concept of frustration follows the necessary and sufficient condition approach, meaning that an empirical phenomenon qualifies as frustration if and only if it features all attributes of the concept.<sup>227</sup> Frustration exhibits two defining attributes, namely the existence of expectations prior to the occurrence of frustration, and an obstruction thereof. With regard to the first attribute, an event or action can cause frustration by constituting an obstruction only if there are preexisting expectations concerning that event or action. This is because obstruction, and by implication frustration, is a function of the extent to which an event relates to a person's expectations in the shape of desires, aspirations, goals, or ambitions. Frustration is not a uniform response to an external stimulus, but rather contingent upon prior expectations one holds. Depending on these expectations, a given action might or might not constitute an obstruction. An individual's or a group of individuals' potential for frustration therefore critically hinges upon preexisting expectations, setting frustration apart from a related, but distinct concept, i.e. deprivation where, in contrast to frustration, preexisting expectations play no role, for one need not have any goals or expectations to be deprived of something. Without prior expectations, an event or action might therefore constitute deprivation under certain conditions,<sup>228</sup> but not frustration.<sup>229</sup>

The second defining attribute frustration is the presence of an obstruction, by which I mean an obstacle that prevents the fulfillment of prior expectations. For frustration to occur, an event or action which an individual has expectations about must block the achievement of

---

<sup>227</sup> For an insightful discussion of two different views on the structure of concepts, i.e. the necessary and sufficient condition view and the family resemblance view, see Gary Goertz, *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 35-39.

<sup>228</sup> Whether or not an event constitutes deprivation depends on the extent to which the event could further an individual's wealth, security and/or wellbeing. This is why not all events constitute deprivation, even in the absence of preexisting goals.

<sup>229</sup> Berkowitz presents an illustrative example: a person whose hopes are dashed by not getting a color TV set is frustrated. If he did not have the desire of possessing the TV set, however, his not getting it would constitute a case of deprivation rather than frustration. "People who do not expect to reach their goals are not anticipating the pleasure these goals would bring. Their hopes are not dashed if they have no hopes". See Berkowitz, "Whatever Happened to the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis?," 692, 697.

expectations or fulfillment of goals. If expectations are not obstructed by events, frustration will not follow. Generally speaking, obstruction has one of two sources: internal or external. Internal thwarting is self-caused and cannot be attributed to the actions of others or structural factors. Goal impediment comes therefore from within:<sup>230</sup> an example for considering the source of frustration to be internal is when one considers one's own shortcomings to be the reason for a failure to reach one's goals, holding oneself rather than external factors worthy of blame. If the source of obstruction, on the other hand, lies outside oneself, we speak of externally generated frustration. This type of frustration can be further distinguished according to the culpability of the external source of frustration. The frustrated either sees the obstruction she experiences as an intentional act directed at her or as accidental and unintended. Her judgment as to whether an outside actor can be blamed for her experience of frustration depends on the attributional interpretations she makes about the nature of obstruction in terms of its hostility.<sup>231</sup>

The concept of frustration presented heretofore encompasses different sources and types of obstruction and different types of impact that obstruction has on an individual. Broadly defined, the presence of preexisting goals obstructed by an event or action constitutes frustration, leaving what Britt and Janus call the "frustrated reactional system" largely undetermined.<sup>232</sup> Since frustration and emotional frustration as one of its subtypes share both attributes so far discussed, a specification of the emotional aspect of emotional frustration is needed to distinguish it from frustration more broadly speaking. I argue that emotional frustration is a specific type of frustration because it puts the individual in an emotional state of displeasure, arouses anger in him, and instigates an aggressive response. Individuals in this emotional state "are seen as less rational, more prone to aggressive behavior, and likely to lash out at the source of the obstruction or violation".<sup>233</sup> Working at the level of the individual's response to obstruction, i.e. "the frustrated reactional system", the distinction between emotional and non-emotional frustration helps us understand why not all frustrations have the same behavioral implications. Individuals deal with some frustrations in a non-emotional way; other frustrations lead to emotional outbursts. Stuart Britt and Sidney Janus show that "[r]eactions to frustration may be aggression, withdrawal, regression,

---

<sup>230</sup> This does not mean that internally-caused frustration cannot be as strong an emotion as externally-caused frustration. The intensity of the feeling is independent of the origin of its emergence.

<sup>231</sup> Leonard Berkowitz, "Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis: Examination and Reformulation," *Psychological Bulletin* 106, no. 1 (1989): 63-64.

<sup>232</sup> Britt and Janus, "Criteria of Frustration," 462-466.

<sup>233</sup> Todd H. Hall, "We Will Not Swallow This Bitter Fruit: Theorizing a Diplomacy of Anger," *Security Studies* 20, no. 4 (2011): 532.

resistance, anger, guilt and remorse, shame and embarrassment".<sup>234</sup> Saul Rosenzweig specifies three alternative conscious reactions to frustration: extrapunitive, intropunitive, and impunitive.<sup>235</sup>

Since frustration is a ubiquitous feature of human interaction,<sup>236</sup> anger and ensuing aggression would be overpredicted if we assumed these reactions to unconditionally follow from every type of frustration. Deviating from the original formulation of the frustration-aggression hypothesis of John Dollard and his coauthors, whose stimulus-centric conception of frustration assumes that "aggression is always a consequence of frustration",<sup>237</sup> Leonard Berkowitz provides an illustrative example of the possibility of non-emotional frustration from the game of American football. In the example, a football player on the way to score a touchdown is hurled down by a player from the opposing team, an obstruction of the former player's goal of scoring a touchdown. Given that the player had expectations of scoring and the presence of an obstruction denying his efforts, we can confidently argue that this regularly occurring scene in a football game is an instance of frustration. The player's reaction to this frustration, however, is likely to be non-emotional, as Berkowitz argues: "there is a very good chance that he will only give his opponent a friendly pat on the behind and run back to his team in apparent good humor".<sup>238</sup> As this example shows, frustration can lead to a range of different reactions. Marked by its quality to arouse anger and aggression, emotional frustration is therefore but one specific type of frustration.

### *Hegemonic Expectations*

As defined in the previous section, frustration is predicated upon prior expectations, one of two defining attributes of frustration (with obstruction being the second). This section defines prior expectations for the purpose of this study and argues that especially hegemonic expectations towards a target state enhance the frustration potential of foreign policymakers by raising the probability that a foreign leader's actions are seen as obstructive.

---

<sup>234</sup> Britt and Janus, "Criteria of Frustration," 466.

<sup>235</sup> Note that all of Rosenzweig's types of reactions are emotional. Extrapunitive reactions carry with them emotions of anger and indignation, intropunitive reactions are based on humiliation and guilt, whereas impunitive reactions are based on embarrassment and shame. See Saul Rosenzweig, "Types of Reaction to Frustration," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 29, no. 3 (1934).

<sup>236</sup> Klaus Scherer, for instance argues that "all organisms, at all stages of ontogenic development, encounter blocks to need satisfaction or goal achievement at least some of the time. Thus, frustration in a very general sense is universal and ubiquitous". See Klaus R. Scherer, "Toward a Concept of 'Modal Emotions'," in *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions*, ed. Paul Ekman and Richard J. Davidson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 28.

<sup>237</sup> Dollard et al., *Frustration and Aggression*, 1.

<sup>238</sup> Berkowitz, *Aggression: Its Causes, Consequences, and Control*, 34.

The starting point of the argument advanced here about the role of emotional frustration in regime change decisions is the assumption that the articulation and implementation of foreign policy requires states and their leaders to think about how they relate to other states. As parts of one international system, states are by definition exposed to contact with one another and "interact in such a way as to be necessary factors in each other's calculations".<sup>239</sup> Regardless of what specific goals and aims states might pursue and how they prioritize them, the presence of other states in the system forces state leaders to develop strategies to deal with one another. This notion is commonly recognized across a wide spectrum of different systemic theories of international relations. Kenneth Waltz, for example, accords theoretical precedence to units in his discussion of the structure of international politics,<sup>240</sup> but argues that once the structure as the arrangement of states is formed "by the coaction of self-regarding units",<sup>241</sup> it will have a bearing on state action by defining "the game one has to win".<sup>242</sup> Alexander Wendt takes issue with much of Waltz' theory, such as his materialist ontology and his classification of unit interactions as "reductionist" theorizing,<sup>243</sup> but agrees with the basic notion that states "interact when they 'take each other into account'".<sup>244</sup>

Based on the consequences of being parts of one whole for state behavior and foreign policy, state leaders adopt expectations in their interactions with each other. These expectations are consequential with regard to the experience of frustration. The more extensive expectations are, the higher is the likelihood that, based on such expectations, the behavior of another state is regarded as obstructive. In theory, at one extreme end of the continuum, states simply do not have specific expectations towards a target state. Whatever the target state does will not constitute obstruction, as there are no goals to be thwarted in the first place. Barring this unrealistic case of a complete lack of expectations, I advance an argument about the consequences of expectations by distinguishing between hegemonic and non-hegemonic expectations. State leaders with non-hegemonic expectations are likely to

---

<sup>239</sup> Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, 13.

<sup>240</sup> Discussing firms and markets as the economic analogy to international political systems, Waltz clearly views the market as a structure emerging from the interaction of firms: "the creators [firms] become the creatures of the market that their activity gave rise to", Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 90. For a critique of how Waltz treats units and systems as autonomous rather than co-constitutive entities, see Richard K. Ashley, "The Poverty of Neorealism," *International Organization* 38, no. 2 (1984): 254-256.

<sup>241</sup> Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, 91.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>243</sup> Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 145-147, 319.

<sup>244</sup> Wendt argues that this interaction of units can take two basic forms in which an actor either treats other units in the system as part of the environment and thus an external given or as a strategic actor with which it will enter into strategic bargaining. *Ibid.*, 148.

treat other states as formal equals, accepting a relationship that is "unranked, flat, [and] egalitarian, without formal or informal super- and subordination".<sup>245</sup> Without hegemonic expectations, states respect the principle of sovereign equality, which refers to what Gerry Simpson calls "existential equality", recognizing the political independence of states inherent in the principle of sovereign equality: "[e]xistential equality [...] includes a state's sphere of domestic jurisdiction (Article 2(7) of the UN Charter), its right to territorial integrity, [and] its right to political independence [...]".<sup>246</sup> To be sure, sovereign equality does not refer to other, more expansive notions of equality, such as the abolishment of "unjustified privileges based on power, religion, wealth, or historical accident".<sup>247</sup> Yet, states with non-hegemonic expectations tend to ascribe the same sovereign rights to other states that they claim for themselves in their dealings with others. As a consequence, this type of expectations reduces the frustration potential of policymakers, as fewer actions of other states are likely to be seen as obstructive.

On the other hand, endorsing a stratified vision of world politics, state leaders can have hegemonic expectations towards other states, thereby considering themselves to be standing above others. I define hegemonic expectations as foreign policymakers' anticipation that a target state will comply with their wishes even if those wishes are concomitant with a violation of sovereign equality. Despite the conventional characterization of international politics as a realm of anarchy, notions of unequal interstate relations are not alien to the field of IR. Research on hierarchy, empire, and special responsibilities employs distinctions similar to the one used here, albeit for different analytical purposes. Ian Clark, for example, shows that since 1815 international order has been hierarchical in that disparities in material capabilities have been accompanied by a more or less formal stratification of international politics, with great powers having the prerogative to structure and ensure the stability of international order and smaller powers having to follow their collective decisions.<sup>248</sup> Literature on empire similarly portrays international politics as a realm in which sovereign rights are unequally distributed. Arguing that the Westphalian model of sovereign statehood obscures imperial relations in world politics, critical empire scholars maintain that

---

<sup>245</sup> Jack Donnelly, "The Elements of the Structures of International Systems," *International Organization* 66, no. 4 (2012): 622.

<sup>246</sup> Gerry Simpson, *Great Powers and Outlaw States: Unequal Sovereigns in the International Legal Order* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2004), 54.

<sup>247</sup> Nico Krisch, "More Equal than the Rest? Hierarchy, Equality and US Predominance in International Law," in *United States Hegemony and the Foundations of International Law*, ed. Michael Byers and George Nolte (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 2003), 135.

<sup>248</sup> Ian Clark, *The Hierarchy of States: Reform and Resistance in the International Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 2-3.

international relations are governed by hierarchy, a thick set of social relations from the imperial center to the periphery, rather than being a thin anarchical space of strategic interaction between fully sovereign states.<sup>249</sup> Others concur that international politics is pervaded by international authority, arguing that the United States is an informal empire that "exercises indirect rule over other political communities through heterogeneous bargains".<sup>250</sup> Finally, research on special responsibilities in world politics supports the view that the realm of international politics must deal with and reconcile "two principles of equality and differentiation",<sup>251</sup> acknowledging that sovereign equality is not the only game in town in international politics. These perspectives make important contributions to how we understand the nature of international politics, facilitating thought on expectations state leaders can have.

The foreign policymakers of a state with hegemonic expectations might not have entered into a hierarchical social relationship with a given target state, but what they expect is compliance with wishes that compromise the target state's sovereign right to autonomous decision-making. Hegemonic expectations typically concern specific actions in the realm of foreign policy, such as alliance behavior or the ratification of bilateral treaties, but they can equally be targeted at a state's domestic policies.<sup>252</sup> The empirical part of this study provides a number of illustrative examples: during the presidency of John F. Kennedy, the United States expected Juan Bosch, the President of the Dominican Republic, to outlaw the political activities of a number of Dominican Communist parties. During William H. Taft's presidency, the US government expected Jose Santos Zelaya, the Nicaraguan President, to adjust his domestic economic policies to grant free access to US companies. In terms of foreign policy, both the Theodore Roosevelt and Taft administrations expected Zelaya to recognize the United States' role as the pacifier of Central America. If foreign leaders resist such expectations that disregard their sovereign rights to make decisions that are autonomous from US demands, their conduct becomes obstructive. This is why hegemonic expectations enhance the frustration potential of foreign policy elites. Expecting certain types of actions from target states inevitably makes the conduct of foreign states a prime concern for

---

<sup>249</sup> Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, "Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies* 31, no. 1 (2002): 109-110.

<sup>250</sup> Daniel H. Nexon and Thomas Wright, "What's at Stake in the American Empire Debate," *American Political Science Review* 101, no. 02 (2007): 267.

<sup>251</sup> Mlada Bukovansky et al., *Special Responsibilities: Global Problems and American Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 5.

<sup>252</sup> Depending on the nature and extensiveness of expectations, any type of action or event can in theory constitute obstruction.

otherwise unconcerned state leaders, raising the possibility that foreign actions constitute obstruction.

### *Perceptions of Obstruction*

If not all types of frustration are emotional, we need to understand under which conditions frustration might instigate an emotional reaction. I argue that the type of reaction to an obstruction depends on how the frustrated individual perceives the obstruction in question. More specifically, if the obstruction is perceived to be emanating from deep and intolerable hatred for the frustrated, it constitutes emotional frustration and is likely to lead to an angry response. More benign perceptions of obstruction that do not associate the obstructive behavior with assumed hatred, but regard it rather as a routine matter of international politics or attribute it to external constraints and requirements of a given situation, are less likely to ignite an emotional response in the frustrated individual.

The importance and place of perception in international relations has been much discussed. According to some views, especially rationalists and realists, perceptions are thought to be a rather negligible factor in international politics. This is because state actors are assumed to seek out as much information as possible about their adversaries, because they are able to gauge their adversaries' intentions quite accurately or at least uniformly, or because perceptions of state leaders are said to take a backseat to factors pertaining to the structural environment of international relations.<sup>253</sup> In short, these views assume that rationality and the constraints of the international system make perception irrelevant. Others argue that state leaders' perceptions of the world are in fact consequential and therefore critical factors worthy of close investigation. Holding the basic premise that, despite potential environmental constraints, actors have a choice,<sup>254</sup> perception becomes a salient factor, having a bearing upon actors' decision-making. Recent scholarship has examined both the sources and consequences of perceptions and, adopting the assumption that there must be a

---

<sup>253</sup> Perceptions do not play a role if one assumes that all states behave similarly under the same structural constraints. John Mearsheimer, for example, assumes that all states assume the worst because "states can never be certain about other states' intentions". Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 31. For the argument that perceptions are epiphenomenal to material power distributions, see Joseph M. Grieco, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism," *International Organization* 42, no. 3 (1988).

<sup>254</sup> Arthur Stein shows that if actors "see themselves as having only a single course of action, then their assessment of the intentions and preferences of others is moot, and their belief that others have alternative choices affects only their expectations", not their actions. See Arthur A. Stein, "When Misperception Matters," *World Politics* 34, no. 4 (1982): 507.



correct way to perceive the world, misperceptions.<sup>255</sup> With regard to the consequences of perception, scholars have analyzed the relationship between what they refer to as misperception and war,<sup>256</sup> policy choices more generally,<sup>257</sup> or to what extent attributional interpretations – i.e. whether someone's behavior can be traced back to the actor's disposition or to the behavior's context – has an impact on the formation of reputation.<sup>258</sup> With regard to the sources of perception and misperception, scholars have pointed to cognitive biases inherent in human decision-making,<sup>259</sup> the impact of belief systems and operational codes,<sup>260</sup> and the social dynamics pertinent to decision-making in groups.<sup>261</sup> Most recently, scholars have assessed the influence of emotions on perception, arguing that "the prior emotional relationship between groups may influence the assignment of reasons and intentions (attributions) to others' behavior".<sup>262</sup>

Despite the many perspectives on perception in international relations scholarship, little has been said on the consequences of perception for an actor's emotional state. I claim that the perception of behavior, especially of foreign leaders' obstructive behavior, is central for understanding when frustration evokes an emotional response in foreign policymakers. The difference between emotional frustration and its non-emotional variants is predicated upon the perception of obstruction. More specifically, I argue that an aggressive response to obstruction is likely when foreign policymakers perceive a foreign leader's obstruction to be rooted in deep hatred and hostility. Such interpretations of obstruction are key to the experience of emotion. As physiological arousal alone is not sufficient to induce an emotion, it is such appraisal of a situation that makes the experience of emotion possible.<sup>263</sup> Psychological studies have shown that attributions regarding the cause of obstruction can

---

<sup>255</sup> Misperception is commonly defined as "the gap between the world as it actually exists and the world as it exists in the mind of the perceiver". See Charles A. Duelfer and Stephen Benedict Dyson, "Chronic Misperception and International Conflict: The U.S.-Iraq Experience," *International Security* 36, no. 1 (2011): 75.

<sup>256</sup> Jack S. Levy, "Misperception and the Causes of War: Theoretical Linkages and Analytical Problems," *World Politics* 36, no. 1 (1983).

<sup>257</sup> Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*.

<sup>258</sup> Jonathan Mercer, *Reputation and International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996).

<sup>259</sup> See Stephen P. Rosen, *War and Human Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), Yaacov Vertzberger, *The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990).

<sup>260</sup> See Alexander L. George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making," *International Studies Quarterly* 13, no. 2 (1969), George, "The Causal Nexus Between Cognitive Beliefs and Decision-Making Behavior: The 'Operational Code' Belief System.", Deborah Welch Larson, "The Role of Belief Systems and Schemas in Foreign Policy Decision-Making," *Political Psychology* 15, no. 1 (1994).

<sup>261</sup> Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink* (Boston: Wadsworth, 1982).

<sup>262</sup> Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships," 134.

<sup>263</sup> Stanley Schachter, "The Interaction of Cognitive and Physiological Determinants of Emotional State," in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, ed. Leonard Berkowitz (New York: Academic Press, 1964).

have an effect on the propensity for aggression.<sup>264</sup> Especially the perception that obstruction is a consequence of hostility arouses anger: "people become angry and aggressive on being kept from reaching a desired goal to the extent that they think that someone had intentionally and unfairly produced this interference or had deliberately and wrongly tried to hurt them".<sup>265</sup> Other studies concur by arguing that frustration is especially likely to create an aggressive response when obstruction is perceived to be arbitrary, i.e. unwarranted.<sup>266</sup> Interestingly, without having received much theoretical attention, these results from psychological studies have in fact found their way into international relations scholarship. Robert Jervis, for example, maintains that the assessment of an adversary's intentions can have emotional consequences. An actor is likely to respond with anger if she perceives in the intentions of the adversary a desire to inflict harm on her, regardless of the actual extent of harm.<sup>267</sup>

Apart from the perception of hatred, the likelihood of foreign policymakers to react with anger to an obstruction depends on two additional factors. First, obstruction must be unexpected for emotional frustration to occur. If an obstruction is considered to be part of regular interactions between individuals, the frustrated individual is unlikely to react emotionally. Berkowitz' football example is a case in point: because players are familiar with the rules of the game, they are likely to abstain from an emotional reaction as long as the behavior of opponents is seen as part of the game and in compliance with its rules. In contrast, obstruction will more likely arouse anger if the frustrated individual is surprised by an obstruction. Because of the "contrast effect" between expectations and the "unpleasant, unexpected thwarting", greater surprise can lead to greater aggression.<sup>268</sup> To be sure, this does not mean that individuals do not hope to reach their preexisting goals in the case of non-emotional frustration. As Berkowitz rightly argues, every type of frustration, emotional or otherwise, presupposes the existence of hopes that are then dashed. Therefore, "frustration can only be surprising (to a greater or lesser extent)".<sup>269</sup>

---

<sup>264</sup> Brendan G. Rule and Andrew R. Nesdale, "Emotional Arousal and Aggressive Behavior," *Psychological Bulletin* 83, no. 5 (1976).

<sup>265</sup> Berkowitz, "Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis: Examination and Reformulation," 63.

<sup>266</sup> James R. Averill, *Anger and Aggression: An Essay on Emotion* (New York: Springer, 1982), Arthur R. Cohen, "Social norms, Arbitrariness of Frustration, and Status of the Agent of Frustration in the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 51, no. 2 (1955), Nicholas Pastore, "The Role of Arbitrariness in the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 47, no. 3 (1952).

<sup>267</sup> Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 33. For a discussion of the importance of how intent is interpreted, see Karin M. Fierke, "Emotion and Intentionality," *International Theory* 6, no. 3 (2014).

<sup>268</sup> Stephen Worchel, "The Effect of Three Types of Arbitrary Thwarting on the Instigation to Aggression," *Journal of Personality* 42, no. 2 (1974): 301.

<sup>269</sup> Berkowitz, "Whatever Happened to the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis?," 697.

Second, for emotional frustration to occur, obstruction must be viewed as deliberate. Accidental obstruction, i.e. obstructions that are viewed as non-intentional, are less likely to cause an emotional response. If obstruction is attributed to a "freely acting agent"<sup>270</sup> held responsible for the interference with the frustrated individual's goal attainment, the frustrated is more likely to react emotionally. This means that the emotional response to an obstruction is predicated upon whether or not the frustrated individual attributes the obstruction to someone else.<sup>271</sup> Anger is more likely aroused by an obstruction if an external agent is seen as having caused the obstruction.<sup>272</sup> The perception of intentionality, not intentionality itself, has thus important ramifications for the type of reaction a frustrated individual is likely to show. Together, the perception of an obstruction as rooted in hatred, as unexpected, and as deliberate triggers emotional frustration with a high probability.

### *Emotional Frustration and Regime Change*

Why is regime change an attractive foreign policy option for emotionally frustrated decision-makers? As a foreign policy that involves a considerable use of force, regime change is an instrument whose application displays aggression. Its ambitions are offensive, not defensive. Regime change can legitimately be treated as what has famously been coined "war of choice". Unlike "wars of necessity" in which there is a "requirement to respond to the use of military force by an aggressor and the fact that no option other than military force exists to reverse what has been done",<sup>273</sup> or in the words of Charles Krauthammer, "a life-or-death struggle in which safety and security of the homeland are at stake",<sup>274</sup> regime change operations belong to the category of "wars of choice", i.e. wars that "do not involve obvious self-defense".<sup>275</sup> To be sure, Haass correctly notes that "[t]he distinction between wars of necessity and wars of choice is heavily subjective."<sup>276</sup> Foreign policy debates endlessly turn around the question of how to conceive of the national interest and what security priorities to

---

<sup>270</sup> Frijda, *The Emotions*, 198.

<sup>271</sup> Phoebe C. Ellsworth and Craig A. Smith, "From Appraisal to Emotion: Differences Among Unpleasant Feelings," *Motivation and Emotion* 12, no. 3 (1988): 294. Craig A. Smith and Phoebe C. Ellsworth, "Patterns of Cognitive Appraisal in Emotion," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 48, no. 4 (1985): 833.

<sup>272</sup> Leonard Berkowitz and Eddie Harmon-Jones, "Toward an Understanding of the Determinants of Anger," *Emotion* 4, no. 2 (2004): 109.

<sup>273</sup> Haass, "Wars of Choice."

<sup>274</sup> Charles Krauthammer, "Wars of Choice, Wars of Necessity," *Time*, October 28 2001.

<sup>275</sup> Haass, "Wars of Choice."

<sup>276</sup> Haass, *War of Necessity, War of Choice: A Memoir of Two Iraq Wars*, 9.

set. But as much as threat perceptions are elastic and "often bitterly contested",<sup>277</sup> regime change operations are unlikely to be a response to a existential national security threat.<sup>278</sup>

In positing a relationship between emotional frustration and the choice for regime change, I borrow from the frustration-aggression hypothesis developed in the field of social psychology. In its most basic formulation, the hypothesis establishes a relationship between the experience of frustration and the inclination to engage in aggression, defined as an "act whose goal-response is injury to an organism".<sup>279</sup> John Dollard and his co-authors (called the Yale group) argued in 1939 that "aggression is always a consequence of frustration" and that the "existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression".<sup>280</sup> In other words, in its original formulation, frustration was said to be both necessary and sufficient for aggression, a rather rigid and deterministic formulation of the relationship. Subsequent studies in the field of psychology have revealed that "contrary to the Yale group's assertion, we cannot say that aggression is always a consequence of frustration",<sup>281</sup> given that aggression can have a range of different sources.<sup>282</sup> Similarly, the sufficiency argument needs further qualification, as "frustration produces instigations to a number of different types of response, one of which is an instigation to some form of aggression".<sup>283</sup> In order to determine types of frustration that indeed trigger an aggressive response, psychology scholars have turned to the attribution of blame and how obstruction is appraised.<sup>284</sup> These important modifications notwithstanding, "[s]urveys of the pertinent research have generally supported the basic idea" of the frustration-aggression hypothesis.<sup>285</sup>

Despite its intuitive relevance, the frustration-aggression hypothesis has gone largely unnoticed in international relations scholarship.<sup>286</sup> Following its basic logic, I argue that there are two reasons why regime change is an attractive option for emotionally frustrated

---

<sup>277</sup> Jervis, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*, 20.

<sup>278</sup> For a similar argument, see Elizabeth N. Saunders, *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 3.

<sup>279</sup> Dollard et al., *Frustration and Aggression*, 8.

<sup>280</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>281</sup> Berkowitz, "Whatever Happened to the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis?," 696.

<sup>282</sup> Berkowitz, *Aggression: Its Causes, Consequences, and Control*.

<sup>283</sup> Neal E. Miller, "The Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis," *Psychological Review* 48, no. 4 (1941): 338. As another author shows, "frustrated individuals may withdraw from the situation or become upset". See Barbara Krahe, *The Social Psychology of Aggression*, 2nd ed. (New York: Psychology Press, 2013), 42.

<sup>284</sup> Regina Krieglmeier, Doris Wittstadt, and Fritz Strack, "How Attribution Influences Aggression: Answers to An Old Question by Using an Implicit Measure of Anger," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology* 45, no. 2 (2009), Kulik and Brown, "Frustration, Attribution of Blame, and Aggression."

<sup>285</sup> Berkowitz and Harmon-Jones, "Toward an Understanding of the Determinants of Anger," 111.

<sup>286</sup> For notable exceptions, see Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships," 122, Schafer, Robison, and Aldrich, "Operational Codes and the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland: A Test of the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis."

decision-makers. First, perceiving obstruction as deliberate, unexpected, and most importantly rooted in hatred, foreign leaders quickly turn into an intolerable menace in the eyes of frustrated policymakers. If obstruction is interpreted as a sign of implacable and irredeemable hostility, there is little policymakers think they can do to deal with the foreign leader's obstruction. Therefore, regime change becomes an attractive option to eliminate a foreign menace perceived to be bent on inflicting harm. Studies in psychology that have tested these tendencies at the individual level have found that "frustrations viewed as having been intentionally produced are more likely to create anger and affective aggression"; similarly, experiments have shown that "participants were much less hostile after a mistreatment when they were assured that the misbehavior was not intended to be a personal attack".<sup>287</sup> Second, as emotional frustration arouses anger, which is defined "as a syndrome of relatively specific feelings, cognitions, and physiological reactions linked associatively with an urge to injure some target",<sup>288</sup> aggression in the form of regime change is not only instrumental, i.e. a means to the goal of overthrowing a foreign leader, but also a form of what has been called affectively-spurred "hostility catharsis".<sup>289</sup> As such, regime change becomes an attractive option to emotionally frustrated policymakers because it allows them to discharge their emotional arousal through aggression targeted at the source of obstruction.<sup>290</sup> The 2003 invasion of Iraq provides an illustrative example of the difference between the instrumental and non-instrumental value of regime change: a day after President George W. Bush had given Saddam Hussein an ultimatum of 48 hours to leave Iraq, the Bush administration received an offer to send the Iraqi dictator to Belarus.<sup>291</sup> The offer fell through, but had it been accepted, the US President would have achieved his goal, i.e. Saddam's removal, without using force, i.e. without discharging his emotional frustration.

### *Operationalizing Frustration*

Like other emotions, emotional frustration is difficult to identify. The literature on emotions in international relations reveals that even scholars who actively advocate a more systematic inquiry into its role in international relations, recognize the difficulties of adequately capturing emotions. In her discussion of the significance of emotions in world politics, Neta Crawford argues that one methodological reason why emotions are an understudied subject in

---

<sup>287</sup> Berkowitz and Harmon-Jones, "Toward an Understanding of the Determinants of Anger," 111.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>289</sup> Berkowitz, "Whatever Happened to the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis?," 693.

<sup>290</sup> This is what is called hostile aggression. For a distinction between instrumental and hostile aggression, see Seymour Feshbach, "The Function of Aggression and the Regulation of Aggressive Drive," *Psychological Review* 71, no. 4 (1964).

<sup>291</sup> George W. Bush, *Decision Points* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2010), 253.

international relations scholarship is their ephemeral and internal nature, which makes them unobservable.<sup>292</sup> Even more pessimistic are Roland Bleiker and Emma Hutchison who argue that "emotions cannot be quantified, nor can they easily be measured, even in qualitative terms".<sup>293</sup> If at all, methods from other disciplines that go beyond orthodox social science are needed, they argue, to make use of emotions in empirical research. Paul Saurette concurs by arguing that "attempts to study and explore the influence of emotions and other psychological factors of interpersonal dynamics and interactions do face significant difficulties", as the "emotional realm is [...] fuzzy".<sup>294</sup> The pessimism regarding the measurability of emotions notwithstanding, this study disagrees with the "fallacious, but often employed logic that implicitly assumes that if a phenomenon is difficult to study [...], there can be no value in exploring its influence on politics".<sup>295</sup> In trying to identify emotional frustration, I rely on the analysis of textual discourse produced by US foreign policymakers, most notably presidents and close foreign policy aides. With the help of archival data and primary sources, I try to distinguish "'genuine' emotions from their instrumental display".<sup>296</sup> In the following, I critically review an alternative quantitative method used in the literature to grasp emotion. I then justify my choice for qualitatively analyzing textual discourse.

The first way to operationalize frustration is through the quantitative analysis of operational codes.<sup>297</sup> Mark Schafer and his co-authors focus on state leaders' perception of the outside world's hostility towards them and their feeling of lacking control over international events, two attributes that represent the two main conceptual components of frustration as defined by the authors. They relate these two components to three items from the set of ten fundamental beliefs forming the operational code of state leaders. Thus, hostility is said to be captured by Alexander George's first philosophical belief about the "nature of political life and the character of political 'others'" and the second belief about the prospects for the realization of political values, while the lack of control is represented by George's fourth philosophical belief capturing the extent to which a subject "sees control of events as residing more with the 'self' or more with others".<sup>298</sup> To measure these two beliefs, Schafer and his co-

---

<sup>292</sup> Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships," 118.

<sup>293</sup> Bleiker and Hutchison, "Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics," 125.

<sup>294</sup> Saurette, "You Dissin Me? Humiliation and Post 9/11 Global Politics," 502-503.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, 503.

<sup>296</sup> Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships."

<sup>297</sup> George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making." While made known to a wider audience by George, the first who defined operational codes was Nathan Leites. See Nathan Leites, *The Operational Code of the Politburo* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951).

<sup>298</sup> Schafer, Robison, and Aldrich, "Operational Codes and the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland: A Test of the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis," 68, 70.

authors use what they call 'Verbs in Context System', i.e. a quantitative tool that codes verbal statements by the actors in question and creates index scores reflecting these statements. For instance, the hostility component of frustration is represented by an index score of a subject's statements concerning the outside world. Computing a ratio between negative and positive attributions the actor makes to others, the score shows how hostile the actor regards his environment: "[t]he more negatively s/he refers to others, the lower the score; the more positively s/he refers to others, the higher the score".<sup>299</sup>

While Schafer et al's operationalization of frustration is rigorous, systematized, and replicable, I consider it inadequate due to two fundamental shortcomings. First, beliefs taken from George's operational code for the quantitative analysis of actors' verbal statements do not correspond to the concept of frustration. The operational code is a collection of political actors' beliefs, not emotions, referring in Alexander George's definition, to a "political leader's beliefs about the nature of politics and political conflict, his views regarding the extent to which historical developments can be shaped, and his notions of correct strategy and tactics".<sup>300</sup> As such, the beliefs taken from George's list of the operational code reflect an actor's broad outlook towards the world rather than their emotions in specific situations. It is therefore doubtful whether the quantitative analysis of verbal statements related to political beliefs is a valid way to measure frustration. Second, even if the operational code adequately corresponded to the emotion of frustration, the usefulness of verbal statements is contingent on whether these statements reflect the feelings of the actors in question, a strong and potentially distortive assumption that presupposes that statements and feelings are generally in line with each other. The reliance on documented speeches and writings, especially in a quantitative analysis, pays little attention to the contextual settings of the data, neglecting the potentially strategic character of these statements typically directed at a particular audience. By assuming the meaning of words out of context, the method is likely to lead to unintended distortions.

To avoid the common pitfalls associated with quantitative methods, this study turns to the analysis of discourse. In trying to identify emotional frustration and perceptions of obstruction, I rely on foreign policymakers' self-reporting and articulation of their emotional states and responses to obstruction in private documents. By paying close attention to the sequence of events and the referents of emotional phrases and words, by situating used

---

<sup>299</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>300</sup> George, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making," 197.

phrases and words into the historical context of the decision-making process, by contextualizing memos, conversations, policy briefs, intelligence reports, cables, and memoirs with the help of newspaper articles and historiographies, I hope to be able to capture the proper meaning of the words used and emotions described by policymakers. By extensively relying on primary documents, I hope to be able to distinguish between genuinely experienced frustration and emotions that are strategically used to persuade a chosen audience. By using declassified governments documents, which were kept away from the public eye, I hope to have found a valuable strategy to avoid running the risk of mistaking public statements for reliable indicators of emotion, given that "political actors constantly evoke and manipulate emotions" in order to receive support for their policies.<sup>301</sup> To complement self-reporting and avoid an unwarranted over-reliance on one single method, I additionally pay close attention to the nature of the decision-making process, particularly with respect to whether alternative policy options were seriously considered and the time required to make decisions. We can reasonably expect that emotionally frustrated policymakers will not carefully weigh their options in accordance with standard rationalist models of decision-making.<sup>302</sup> We can equally expect the anger-arousing quality of emotional frustration to reduce "the demand for information" and shorten "decision times".<sup>303</sup> Therefore, we should be able to observe these implications of emotional frustration to have more confidence in the empirical veracity of emotional frustration based on self-reporting.

The use of policymakers' self-reporting of emotional states is certainly not uncontested. According to Paul Saurette, "[p]eople are rarely self-conscious of the full slate of factors that are driving their thinking, their decision-making and their actions". Also, "individuals rarely explicitly monitor the precise emotions they feel and are perhaps even less able to accurately analyze their impact".<sup>304</sup> A potential lack of self-awareness and the failure to accurately verbalize emotions are thus said to be challenges to the identification of emotions and, more specifically, emotional frustration. My response to this cautionary note is two-fold: first, I argue that while the potential lack of self-awareness on the part of

---

<sup>301</sup> Crawford, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships," 149. For the same reasons, Lene Hansen cautions against the use of memoirs, as they are "obviously well suited for constructing legacies" and thus not fully representative. See L. Hansen, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (London: Routledge, 2006), 54.

<sup>302</sup> McDermott, "The Feeling of Rationality: The Meaning of Neuroscientific Advances for Political Science," 696.

<sup>303</sup> Reinhard Wolf, "Respect and Disrespect in International Politics: The Significance of Status Recognition," *International Theory* 3, no. 1 (2011): 129.

<sup>304</sup> Saurette, "You Dissin Me? Humiliation and Post 9/11 Global Politics," 503.



policymakers is a serious issue for the study of affect or other non-cognitive feelings,<sup>305</sup> it is less of a challenge to this study. Because emotional frustration by definition involves cognitive appraisal, it is impossible for policymakers not to be aware of this emotional state. Second, if it is true that actors cannot fully account for their emotional states, failing to accurately verbalize them, the resulting gap between statements captured by the method of this study and the actual depth and breadth of experienced emotions will not bias my findings in my favor, given that I will be less likely to identify emotional frustration where it actually exists rather than identifying emotional frustration where there is none. The use of self-reporting therefore remains a viable strategy to identify emotional frustration.

## **Conclusion**

Emotional frustration, I have argued, plays an important role in decisions about regime change. The combination of hegemonic expectations and perceptions of intolerable hatred as the source of a foreign leader's obstructive conduct can lead to emotional frustration on the part of foreign policymakers, arousing anger and an inclination to aggression. In such situations, regime change is an attractive foreign policy option. It carries the promise of not only putting a stop to obstruction, but to effectively eliminate a foreign menace perceived to be implacable, and at the same time, allows frustrated leaders to discharge their emotions through the use of considerable force. The following four chapters illustrate the logic of the argument in four different case studies of US regime change: Cuba in 1906, Nicaragua between 1909 and 1912, the Dominican Republic in 1965, and Iraq in 2003.

---

<sup>305</sup> See for example Ross, "Coming in from the Cold: Constructivism and Emotions."



## CHAPTER THREE

### The 1906 Intervention in Cuba

In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the United States engaged in a number of military interventions. Emerging victorious from the Spanish-American War of 1898,<sup>306</sup> a new global conception of power propelled the country into what George Kennan called "foreign adventure and authority".<sup>307</sup> Apart from the Spanish-American War itself, in which American troops were sent to Cuba, Guam, the Philippines and Puerto Rico, the following years saw more US military interventions in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua.<sup>308</sup> US interventionist behavior in these years was so pronounced that the year 1898 has been called a "watershed year",<sup>309</sup> representing a turning point in American history that marked the onset of recurrent US power projection by force beyond its own continental borders.

Out of the plethora of interventions in the first two decades of the twentieth century, this chapter will focus on one of that era's first cases: the 1906 intervention in Cuba, simply called the second intervention,<sup>310</sup> which saw the US dismantle the constitutional order of a young, nominally independent Cuban republic, and install American direct rule for almost three years. More than being a case of intervention, the second intervention was the very first case of US regime change.<sup>311</sup> In other US military interventions of that time, the degree of

---

<sup>306</sup> Note that scholars have rightly pointed out that the term "Spanish-American War" is contested, as it overlooks Cuban agency in the conflict, depicting the war as one between Spain and the US only. See Louis A. Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), xii. Yet, for the sake of clarity, this chapter adheres to the war's most common designation.

<sup>307</sup> George F. Kennan, *American Diplomacy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012 [1951]), 18. See also Robert E. Hannigan, *The New World Power: American Foreign Policy, 1898-1917* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002). For US foreign policy towards the Caribbean in the early twentieth century, see David Healy, *Drive to Hegemony: The United States in the Caribbean, 1898-1917* (London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988). For a list of "expansionist initiatives undertaken by the United States around the turn of the century", see Colin Dueck, "The Sources of American Expansion," *Security Studies* 11, no. 1 (2001): 171-172.

<sup>308</sup> Bruce W. Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy: The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century*, 4th ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2010), 98-99, Lester D. Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934* (Wilmington: SR Books, 2002), xvi.

<sup>309</sup> Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography*, ix.

<sup>310</sup> This common numbering treats the 1898 Spanish-American War and the following American occupation as the first intervention in Cuba.

<sup>311</sup> Employing a broader definition of regime change that encompasses overt military interventions and covert operations, but also cases of outright annexation, Stephen Kinzer begins his study of "America's long 'regime change' century" with the overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893, a case of overthrow followed by territorial annexation to US territory. See Stephen Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* (New York: Times Books, 2006), 2.

interference was significantly more limited. In the 1904 intervention in the Dominican Republic, for example, the US assumed control of Dominican custom houses, but refrained from changing the country's governance structure.<sup>312</sup> To the extent to which the second intervention in Cuba dismantled the Cuban authority structure followed by three-year-long US occupation, the 1906 intervention exhibits key regime change characteristics. First, the change that the US imposed on Cuba was coercive. Although no fighting was done by the US military in Cuba,<sup>313</sup> troops were deployed and remained on the island as occupying force. Secondly, the intervention restructured the Cuban political system by imposing US direct rule, meeting the criterion of change at the polity level and being more than mere leadership change. Finally, it was an instance of what John Owen calls "ex ante promotion". Regime change in Cuba was not preceded by the use of force for other reasons such as by a war fought for strategic assets.<sup>314</sup> The original purpose of the deployment was indeed regime change from the very onset.

This chapter shows how Roosevelt's decision to order marines to Cuba was predicated upon his growing frustration with, first, the 1906 August revolt headed by disgruntled members of the Liberal party who in view of persecution and expected vote rigging had boycotted the 1905 Cuban presidential election, and second, the unsuccessful response of Tomas Estrada Palma, the incumbent Cuban President, who failed to quell the rebellion and instead decided to resign from the presidency, exposing the country to complete anarchy. The insurrection and Palma's response to it were obstructive to Roosevelt's hegemonic expectation of order, peace and stability in Cuba, publicly articulated in the 1904 Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine. What is more, Roosevelt perceived these Cuban obstructions as unexpected and hostile towards the United States, leading to emotional frustration with both Palma and the Liberal, which eventually prompted him to intervene against both the Cuban government and its armed opposition.

The outline of the chapter is as follows: the first section starts out with an account of how the intervention came about, focusing both on domestic Cuban politics and the US decision to intervene. The second section puts the intervention into its historical context by

---

<sup>312</sup> On the 1904 Dominican intervention, see Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 20-26. In order to conceptually cope with different types of interventions, Elizabeth Saunders distinguishes transformative from non-transformative interventions. See Elizabeth N. Saunders, "Transformative Choices: Leaders and the Origins of Intervention Strategy," *International Security* 34, no. 2 (2009): 124-125.

<sup>313</sup> Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books, 2002), 141.

<sup>314</sup> For the distinction between ex-post and ex-ante regime change, see Owen, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010*, 2.

shedding light on US relations with Latin America at large and US-Cuba relations in particular prior to the intervention. Special attention will be paid to the Monroe Doctrine, the Spanish-American War of 1898, the Teller and Platt Amendments, and the Roosevelt Corollary of 1904. After these two introductory sections, the third section shows what role Roosevelt's frustration with the uprising and the Cuban government's response to it played in his decision to engage in regime change. More specifically, the section presents Roosevelt's hegemonic expectations towards Cuba, how events in Cuba obstructed these expectations, how Roosevelt perceived these obstructions, and finally the level of emotional frustration Roosevelt experienced. Section Four critically assesses three alternative explanations for the 1906 intervention and highlights their empirical inadequacies: the security-concern argument, the economic-interest argument, and finally the opportunity-for-expansion argument. Section Five concludes.

### **The Outcome - Regime Change in Cuba**

The second intervention in Cuba began on September 29, 1906, when two thousand US marines landed on Cuban soil by command of US Secretary of War William H. Taft. By the time the troops disembarked from their battleships, Cuba had lost its government. One day before the intervention was carried out, the President of the Cuban republic, Tomas Estrada Palma, had resigned together with his Vice President Domingo Mendez Capote on September 28. Upon "[t]he failure of [the Cuban] Congress to act on the irrevocable resignation of the President of the Republic of Cuba",<sup>315</sup> Taft, by order of his President, filled the power vacuum, proclaimed immediately upon arrival the establishment of a provisional US government, and became governor of the island until early October 1906, when US President Theodore Roosevelt appointed Charles Magoon as his successor. Cuba remained occupied under direct US rule from the day of the intervention until the US military left the country in February 1909.<sup>316</sup> Before leaving, the US supervised elections from which the Liberals emerged victorious.<sup>317</sup> Though nominally independent after the election of a new Cuban government and the withdrawal of the US military, newly elected President Jose Miguel Gomez assured Roosevelt in a telegram that he would "continue to give evidence of the full

---

<sup>315</sup> Taft's proclamation to the people of Cuba, September 29, 1906. *William H. Taft Papers, Series 4: William Howard Taft-Theodore Roosevelt Correspondence, 1897-1918*, reel 320, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>316</sup> Hugh Thomas, *Cuba: Or the Pursuit of Freedom* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1971), 479-489.

<sup>317</sup> Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba Under the Platt Amendment, 1902-1934* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1986), 107. Thomas, *Cuba: Or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 489.

consciousness of [Cuban] international duties",<sup>318</sup> professing his recognition and approval of the possibility that the US might reoccupy the island if US expectations of order, peace, and stability could not be lived up to.

The US decision to intervene and occupy the island was preceded by political turmoil in Cuba. The main source of contestation was the Cuban presidential election in December 1905, but in anticipation of defeat, the Liberal party began to revolt as early as in November 1905.<sup>319</sup> Protesting against pre-election persecution, the disruption of opposition rallies, and the harassment of Liberal candidates, which even culminated in the assassination of one Liberal congressman, the Liberals withdrew from the general elections, paving the way for Tomas Estrada Palma's uncontested reelection on December 1, 1905.<sup>320</sup> Following the election, protests erupted in the country and persisted up until the intervention. The political instability in Cuba had its roots in the deep conflict between the Liberals and the other major Cuban party, the governing Republicans, which later renamed themselves Moderates and supported Palma. Frustrated by election results that the opposition claimed to be fraudulent, rebels took up arms and began to revolt against the government. Unrest and violence peaked in what is referred to as the 1906 August Revolt, when Palma and his administration proved unable to quell the rebellion. Confronted with a rebel force of an estimated 24,000 fighters, a rural guard of only three thousand men and the absence of a standing army contributed to the government's loss of control.<sup>321</sup>

The US response to domestic political events in Cuba was premised upon Roosevelt's simultaneous determination to keep Cuba stable and his unwillingness to intervene militarily. Initially, the US government tried to mediate by bringing together Liberals and Moderates, but negotiations between the two parties never led to a political settlement. President Palma refused to strike a compromise with the rebels unless they would lay down their arms. Similarly, the revolting Liberals refused to put an end to the armed conflict unless Palma's cabinet would resign. Despite being concerned about the breakdown of the Cuban political system, one day before the beginning of the intervention President Roosevelt thought it would be "a misfortune [...] to undertake to form a provisional government if there was a fair chance of obtaining peace by according to the Cubans themselves to form their own

---

<sup>318</sup> Gomez to Roosevelt, November 18, 1908. *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States (PRFRUS) 1908*, 252.

<sup>319</sup> David A. Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba: A History of the Second Intervention, 1906-1909* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1938), 33.

<sup>320</sup> Pérez, *Cuba Under the Platt Amendment, 1902-1934*, 92.

<sup>321</sup> Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 29, Thomas, *Cuba: Or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 474-475.

provisional government".<sup>322</sup> A plea sent to Palma by Roosevelt on September 25, 1906 to abide by the United States' mediation proposals was the last attempt to get the Cuban President and the rebels to the negotiation table. Palma refused and resigned three days later, prompting Roosevelt to eventually order intervention.<sup>323</sup>

Intervention and occupation had far-reaching consequences for Cuban autonomy and sovereignty. The republic that had become nominally independent in 1902 was from 1906 to 1909 once again governed by the US like in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War. Though formal annexation had been contemplated long before the Second Intervention,<sup>324</sup> the US nominally retained Cuba's sovereignty and statehood. In a proclamation to the Cuban people on the day of the intervention, William Taft promised to conform "as far as may be to the constitution of Cuba" and called his provisional government a Cuban government.<sup>325</sup> Accordingly, the Cuban flag was not replaced by the American one, but remained hoisted during the time of occupation. Furthermore, though the occupying military forces were kept in Cuba, they did not appear in uniform. Despite the absence of outright annexation, formal sovereignty did not have any restraining effect on the powers of the directly governing occupier. The reins of rule were clearly in the hands of the US, and though Charles Magoon's administration was civilian rather than military, many American officers, who had already served in Cuba from 1898 until 1902, were reinstated.<sup>326</sup>

### **The Historical Context**

The practice of regime change in 1906 Cuba cannot be understood if not put into its historical context. US-Cuba relations did neither start with Theodore Roosevelt's intervention in 1906, nor with the war of 1898. Inasmuch as the expansion of American influence in the nineteenth century did not only manifest itself in the acquisition and conquest of territory, but also in the projection of American dominance into the wider region, Cuba was, as any other country in the Americas, subject to US designs and ambitions since the beginning of that century. One of the most prominent manifestations of these ambitions was the Monroe Doctrine of 1823, which both urged European powers not to meddle in the United States' hemisphere and, at the

---

<sup>322</sup> Roosevelt to Taft, September 28, 1906. *William H. Taft Papers, Series 4: William Howard Taft-Theodore Roosevelt Correspondence, 1897-1918*, reel 320, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>323</sup> Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 29-35.

<sup>324</sup> As Louis Pérez shows, annexation was a seriously pursued goal by many US foreign policy elites in the nineteenth century long before the Spanish-American War. See Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography*, 12-15.

<sup>325</sup> Taft's proclamation to the people of Cuba, September 29, 1906. *William H. Taft Papers, Series 4: William Howard Taft-Theodore Roosevelt Correspondence, 1897-1918*, reel 320, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>326</sup> Thomas, *Cuba: Or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 482.

same time, entitled the US to regional hegemony. Newly independent states in Latin America were "not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers".<sup>327</sup> In return, the US promised not to interfere in the affairs of existing European colonies, a rationale that aimed at staking out the boundaries of the American hemisphere, while separating it from the realm of European influence and possession.

As the Monroe Doctrine slowly became "the bedrock of U.S. foreign policy in the Western Hemisphere",<sup>328</sup> the principles laid down in it also determined US-Cuba relations of the nineteenth century. As a Spanish colonial possession, Cuba had been under European rule since the end of the fifteenth century, hence lying outside the self-declared hemisphere of the US. In accordance with its promise not to interfere in European colonies, the US assured to respect Spanish reign over the island, remaining neutral when the first rebellion against Spanish rule broke out in 1868. In June 1895, the US declared, once again, that its neutrality laws applied to the Cuban insurrection against Spain, which meant no US interference.<sup>329</sup> Despite this seemingly consistent approach to foreign policy in the region, the US disposition towards Cuba was in fact much more ambiguous. A closer look reveals how the US tried to strike a balance between, on the one hand, recognizing Spanish rule and, on the other hand, pursuing its own designs for Cuba. Twice, in 1848 and in 1854, the US tried to purchase the island from Spain and incorporate it into its own territory. After Spain repeatedly refused to sell its colony, the Ostend Manifesto, a report drafted by the US Ministers to Spain, Great Britain, and France in November 1854, alluded to the "great law of self-preservation" that would give the US the right to wrest Cuba from Spain if the latter refused to sell it.<sup>330</sup> The reason why the manifesto invoked the law of self-preservation was the notion that Cuba was posing an existential threat to US security if left in Spanish hands: "Indeed the Union can never enjoy repose, nor possess reliable security, as long as Cuba is not embraced within its boundaries".<sup>331</sup> To be sure, US President Franklin Pierce ruled out the use of force to gain Cuba, but the desire to annex the island was so pronounced that it drove "Cuba deep into the realms of national consciousness".<sup>332</sup> In order to resolve the tension between this desire and Spanish sovereignty over Cuba, the US temporarily accepted Spanish rule, regarding it as a

---

<sup>327</sup> James Monroe, *Seventh Annual Message, December 2* (1823 [cited July 23, 2014]); available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29465#axzz1j4SQGvZY>.

<sup>328</sup> Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy: The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century*, 34.

<sup>329</sup> Lester H. Brune, *Chronological History of U.S. Foreign Relations: 1607-1932, Vol. 1*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 214-215; 260.

<sup>330</sup> James Buchanan, John Y. Mason, and Pierre Soule, *Ostend Manifesto, October 15* (1854 [cited January 10, 2012]); available from <http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/havana/Ostend2.htm>.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.

<sup>332</sup> Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography*, 4.



substitute for annexation. The no-transfer principle, which did not accept any modification of sovereignty other than in the form of US acquisition of Cuba, was born.

The next Cuban insurrection and struggle for independence, starting in 1895 and ultimately leading to the Spanish-American War, upset the fragile equilibrium between the US, Spain and Cuba. The transfer of sovereignty over Cuba from Spain to the US, which had been long contemplated, but never realized, now became a serious possibility. While the Spanish rulers were already struggling to quell the two previous rebellions, first from 1868 to 1878 and then from 1879 to 1880, the third Cuban insurrection proved to be too difficult to control. Crumbling in the face of the rebels' forceful resistance, Cuban victory seemed inevitable by the early spring of 1898. To the US, the prospect of Cuban independence was everything but comforting. Sovereignty and control over Cuba was to either stay with Spain or to be transferred to the US, as was spelled out in the no-transfer principle. Since Spain was not only on the brink of losing the war with the Cuban rebels, but also about to lose its colony altogether, then-President William McKinley decided to intervene. Contrary to what the labeling of the war suggests, the "war was thus directed against both Spaniards and Cubans".<sup>333</sup>

The American disposition towards Cuba and the Cuban struggle for independence became all but evident in the aftermath of the Spanish-American War. Emerging as military victor against Spain, the US kept its troops on the island and, rather than granting long-awaited independence to the Cuban rebels, installed an occupying administration from January 1899 through to May 1902. Interestingly enough, occupation occurred despite a joint resolution of the United States Congress, the fourth article of which is known as the Teller Amendment. As a compromise struck in April 1898 between Congress, which in large parts supported the cause of Cuban independence, and the McKinley administration, the Teller Amendment disclaimed "any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over said island [Cuba] except for the pacification thereof".<sup>334</sup> What at first glance seemed to rule out occupation was interpreted differently after the war: "'pacification' of the island manifestly meant the establishment in that island of a government capable of adequately protecting life, liberty and property".<sup>335</sup> This newly constructed meaning of pacification was embodied by another central document, the Platt Amendment. In order to

---

<sup>333</sup> Ibid., 19.

<sup>334</sup> Henry M. Teller, *Teller Amendment: Congress Joint Resolution, April 20* (1898 [cited January 10, 2012]; available from <http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/teller.htm>).

<sup>335</sup> Orville Platt in 1901, quoted in Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography*, 31.

ensure continuing US influence beyond the era of occupation, the US actively promoted the idea to codify the US-Cuba relationship in a Cuban constitution that was to be established by a constitutional convention by the end of 1900. To this effect, Congress passed the Platt Amendment granting the US the right to intervene.<sup>336</sup> Reluctantly and after some resistance, the constitutional convention accepted the provisions in May 1901, for the alternative to limited independence was occupation.<sup>337</sup> The Platt Amendment was certainly the reason why in 1902 Cuba became "independent in name only".<sup>338</sup> It also reflected the American disposition towards Cuba.

## **Emotional Frustration and Regime Change**

### *Roosevelt's Hegemonic Expectations Towards Cuba*

As shown, Cuba had occupied an exceptional place in the minds of US leaders since the beginning of the nineteenth century.<sup>339</sup> Due to its close geographic proximity to the United States, many US leaders before Theodore Roosevelt showed great interest in the island. Having tried to buy Cuba from Spain at the beginning of the century, Thomas Jefferson, US President from 1801 to 1809, wrote in 1823: "I candidly confess, that I have ever looked on Cuba as the most interesting addition which could ever be made to our system of States".<sup>340</sup> John Quincy Adams, then-Secretary of State, argued in the same year that "[t]here are laws of political as well as physical gravitation" pulling Cuba towards the US mainland,<sup>341</sup> showing that the possession of Cuba was a major preoccupation for American policymakers.

For Theodore Roosevelt, Cuba was an important subject of US foreign policy and the 1906 August revolt inevitably thrust the island onto his foreign policy agenda. Musings on the possibility of annexation professed by a number of preceding US leaders, however, were not his. Strictly against annexation, Roosevelt did not get tired highlighting how his policies towards Cuba exhibited his aversion to it. Referring to the end of the first US occupation in 1902, Roosevelt boasted in 1907 that "not a European nation would have given up Cuba as

---

<sup>336</sup> *Text of the Platt Amendment, 1901*, ([cited January 10, 2012]; available from <http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/platt.htm>).

<sup>337</sup> Thomas, *Cuba: Or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 453-456.

<sup>338</sup> Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 27.

<sup>339</sup> US President Thomas Jefferson considered annexing Cuba as early as in 1808. See Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963), 4.

<sup>340</sup> Jefferson to Monroe, October 24, 1823, Thomas Jefferson, *Thomas Jefferson on the Monroe Doctrine* (1823 [cited July 23, 2014]; available from [http://history-world.org/thomas\\_jefferson\\_on\\_the\\_monroe\\_d.htm](http://history-world.org/thomas_jefferson_on_the_monroe_d.htm)).

<sup>341</sup> *US Independence*, ([cited July 23, 2014]; available from <http://www.cubahistory.org/en/british-occupation-and-us-independence/us-independence.html>).

we gave it up".<sup>342</sup> In June 1904, at the national nominating convention of the Republican Party, the party platform proudly recalled that the Roosevelt administration "set Cuba free" and gave the island back to "the Cuban people with order restored" after nearly three years of occupation.<sup>343</sup> Roosevelt presented his foreign policy towards Cuba as something distinct from how other great powers would have treated the island. Referring to the withdrawal of American troops from Cuba in 1902, Roosevelt proudly argued in his autobiography that the promise to leave the island was redeemed when the first occupation ended in 1902.<sup>344</sup> Annexation or expansion by conquest were not his preferred policy options in his dealings with the island. As Hugh Thomas puts it, "Roosevelt's conception of the U.S. was not its expansion through the capture or purchase of greater territory", making him "uninterested in the annexation of Cuba".<sup>345</sup>

Rather than aiming for the annexation of Cuba and its integration into the Union, Roosevelt's approach towards the island centered on a specific set of expectations regarding what Roosevelt considered proper state conduct. His position was a middle way between two extremes: on the one hand, expansionists among the US policy elite who held on to a century-old desire to incorporate Cuba into US territory, were eager to seize every opportunity to annex the island. US Senator Albert Beveridge, one of the most vociferous proponents of annexation among Roosevelt's contemporaries who in a speech in 1898 called Cuba "the richest spot on the globe",<sup>346</sup> argued in the wake of the 1906 Cuban insurrection against President Palma that the US President "should at once take the Island".<sup>347</sup> At the other extreme, Senator Joseph B. Foraker questioned Roosevelt's right to intervene "with force of arms to overthrow established government or compel it to make terms with lawless bands of

---

<sup>342</sup> Elting E. Morison, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt: The Big Stick, 1907-1909*, 8 vols., vol. 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952), 774-775.

<sup>343</sup> Republican Party, *Republican Party Platform of 1904* (1904 [cited July 20, 2014]; available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29631>).

<sup>344</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, *An Autobiography* (New York: Macmillan, 1914), 318.

<sup>345</sup> Thomas, *Cuba: Or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 481. See also Richard H. Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean: The Panama Canal, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Latin American Context* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), 52, Stephen Wertheim, "Reluctant Liberator: Theodore Roosevelt's Philosophy of Self-Government and Preparation for Philippine Independence," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 39, no. 3 (2009): 502. Speaking about the possible annexation of the Dominican Republic in 1904, Roosevelt famously said that he had "about the same desire to annex it as a gorged boa constrictor might have to swallow a porcupine wrong-end-to", see Roosevelt to Bishop, February 23, 1904, in Joseph B. Bishop, *Theodore Roosevelt and His Time Shown in His Own Letters, Vol. 1* (New York: Scribner's, 1919), 431.

<sup>346</sup> Albert Beveridge, *The March of the Flag, September 16* (1898 [cited July 23, 2014]; available from <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1898beveridge.asp>).

<sup>347</sup> Roosevelt to Lodge, September 27, 1906, in Theodore Roosevelt and Henry C. Lodge, *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884-1918, Vol. 2* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), 234.

insurgents".<sup>348</sup> Similarly, William Jennings Bryan, a leading Democrat, opposed intervention and called Roosevelt's Cuba policy "reckless militarism".<sup>349</sup>

Roosevelt's middle way between these two extremes, annexation on the one hand and strict abstention from intervention on the other, was predicated upon his general outlook that sovereignty and independence came not only with state rights, but also with state responsibilities.<sup>350</sup> In Roosevelt's view, each nation had to live up to a specific set of duties commensurate with its place in the world. Placed at the cutting edge of history by Roosevelt, the United States had the duty to act as "civilization's leading disseminators".<sup>351</sup> Following the common doctrine of the time that nations could be divided into three developmental stages from savagery to barbarism to civilization, this view implied US duties vis-à-vis other states in the hemisphere and Roosevelt was willing to accept them, arguing that the US could not "perpetually assert the Monroe Doctrine [...] without ourselves [the US] accepting some responsibility in connection therewith".<sup>352</sup> He also argued that

[w]e have duties to others and duties to ourselves; and we can shirk neither. We have become a great nation, forced by the fact of its greatness into relations with the other nations of the earth, and we must behave as beseems a people with such responsibilities.<sup>353</sup>

In Roosevelt's view, state responsibilities differed from state to state, depending on their developmental stage. From Cuba, as with any other country in the Western hemisphere, he expected first and foremost the maintenance of domestic peace and stability, conditions he regarded as necessary for the continued independence of the island. Without domestic order, by which Roosevelt meant the "universal respect for authority and for the rule of law",<sup>354</sup> social progress could not be sustained and states situated in the United States' hemisphere would forfeit their right to sovereignty and self-rule. Nowhere were these expectations of order, peace and stability articulated more clearly and explicitly than in his fourth annual message to congress on December 6, 1904:

---

<sup>348</sup> Foraker, *Notes of a Busy Life*, Vol. 2, 56. See also Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean: The Panama Canal, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Latin American Context*, 538-539.

<sup>349</sup> Morison, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt: The Big Stick, 1907-1909*, 414.

<sup>350</sup> As William Widenor puts it, Roosevelt believed that for nations "there were no rights without concomitant duties". See William C. Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge and the Search for an American Foreign Policy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 133.

<sup>351</sup> Frank Ninkovich, "Roosevelt, Theodore: Civilization as Ideology," *Diplomatic History* 10, no. 3 (1986): 232.

<sup>352</sup> Roosevelt to Trevelyan, in Widenor, *Henry Cabot Lodge and the Search for an American Foreign Policy*, 133.

<sup>353</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, *Inaugural Address, March 4* (1905 [cited July 13, 2014]; available from <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3564>).

<sup>354</sup> Jeffrey A. Engel, "The Democratic Language of American Imperialism: Race, Order, and Theodore Roosevelt's Personifications of Foreign Policy Evil," *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 19, no. 4 (2008): 679.

[a]ll that this country [the US] desires is to see the neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship [...]. It is a mere truism to say that every nation, whether in America or anywhere else, which desires to maintain its freedom, its independence, must ultimately realize that the right of such independence can not be separated from the responsibility of making good use of it.<sup>355</sup>

Furthermore, Roosevelt's fourth annual message specified in what has come to be known as the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine what the United States, the most civilized nation in the region according to the US President, would do if a country in the hemisphere proved unable to live up to its assigned duties:

chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power.<sup>356</sup>

Concerning not only Cuba, but all states in what Roosevelt referred to as the "Western Hemisphere", the Roosevelt Corollary became a new principle of American foreign policy, establishing a set of state responsibilities that had to be fulfilled if American intervention was to be averted. Only if stability, order and prosperity, the three basic notions of desirable state conduct according to Roosevelt, were pursued by a state inside the hemisphere, did this state retain its right to independence.

Roosevelt revealed his hegemonic expectations towards Cuba in the wake of the 1906 August revolt in Cuba in exchanges with the Cuban leadership. In a letter to Don Gonzalo de Quesadas, Cuban Minister to the United States, written on September 14, 1906, two weeks before the American intervention, Roosevelt spelled out what he had expected from Cuba:

[t]his nation asks nothing of Cuba, save that it shall continue to develop as it has developed during these past seven years [since US victory in the Spanish-American War]; that it shall know and practice the orderly liberty which will assuredly bring an ever-increasing measure of peace and prosperity to the beautiful Queen of the Antilles [Cuba].<sup>357</sup>

In another letter, this time to the Cuban President Tomas Estrada Palma, Roosevelt pleaded for the Cuban President to stay in office to prevent chaos and to fulfill his responsibilities as the country's President in a way that when he left office, he would leave his "country still

---

<sup>355</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, *Fourth Annual Message, December 4* (1904 [cited July 14, 2014]); available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29545#axzz1j47rZkHC>.

<sup>356</sup> Ibid.

<sup>357</sup> "The President to the Cuban Minister", September 14, 1906. *PRFRUS 1906*, Part 1, 481.

free".<sup>358</sup> Similarly, Elihu Root, first Secretary of War from 1899 to 1904 and then Secretary of State from 1905 to 1909, expressed his views about the US attitude towards Cuba in a private letter to Leonard Wood, Cuba's military governor during the first American occupation from 1899 to 1902: "[t]he preservation of that independence by a country so small as Cuba [...] must depend upon her strict performance of international obligations".<sup>359</sup> Root confirmed this expectation of orderly conduct and his opposition to annexation in a private letter to a journalist, underlining the notion he shared with Roosevelt that independence and the responsibility to provide for stability, order and prosperity were inseparably linked to each other: "[w]e do not want Cuba ourselves [...], we want her to govern herself decently and in order".<sup>360</sup> Roosevelt's private correspondence with William Howard Taft, Roosevelt's Secretary of War, confirmed the centrality of expectations of orderly state conduct he had from the Cuba, especially after the August revolt had broken out. In a letter dating back to September 10, 1906, Roosevelt urged Taft to "tell Palma [Cuban President] to use in the most effective fashion all the resources at his command to quell revolt".<sup>361</sup>

### *Cuban Obstruction*

Domestic political turmoil and armed insurrection against the Cuban leadership headed by President Palma alarmed the American leadership. Because Cuba was the American showcase of responsible state conduct and peaceful development up until the 1906 August revolt, the insurrection came as a major blow to the US government. Before August 1906, when Cuba was in the midst of an armed rebellion that threatened the very social and political setup the US had helped create during the first occupation from 1899 to 1902, Roosevelt had nothing but praise for the country. In December 1904, the US President commended the Cuban leadership for its "progress in stable and just civilization which with the aid of the Platt amendment Cuba has shown since our [US] troops left the island", wishing all countries in the region would follow Cuba's example.<sup>362</sup> Just two weeks before the beginning of the August revolt, Secretary of State Elihu Root similarly expressed his satisfaction with the island, convinced that "[t]he Cubans have done admirably in their experiment in self-

---

<sup>358</sup> Telegram from Taft to Palma, September 25, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 1: Letters and Related Material, 1759-1919*, reel 68, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>359</sup> Root to Wood, February 9, 1901, in Philip C. Jessup, *Elihu Root: 1845-1909, Vol. 1* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1938), 313.

<sup>360</sup> Root to Henry Watterson, March 5, 1908, in *ibid.*, 538.

<sup>361</sup> Roosevelt to Taft, September 10, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 2: Letterpress Copybooks, 1897-1916*, reel 342, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>362</sup> "I most earnestly hope that in the end they will be able to stand, if not entirely alone, yet in some such relation to the United States as Cuba now stands". Roosevelt, *Fourth Annual Message, December 4* ([cited]).

government" and that "they have maintained the governmental organization and methods which we [the US] turned over to them four years ago [1902]".<sup>363</sup>

While Cuba met and even exceeded the expectations of the US government under Theodore Roosevelt in the wake of its formal independence, it was the same expectations of order, peace, stability and prosperity that the 1906 August revolt crushed. The severity of the revolt, whose ramifications were at first underestimated by the American mission to Havana,<sup>364</sup> posed a serious threat to the internal stability of the Cuban polity, making a descent into violent chaos a real possibility. The extent to which the armed insurrection came as an obstruction to US expectations towards Cuban order, peace, and prosperity is reflected by Roosevelt's correspondence with the US mission to Cuba. On September 14, a month after the onset of armed rebellion in Cuba, Frank Steinhart, US consul general in Havana, spoke of a "prevailing state of anarchy"<sup>365</sup> in his cable to Washington, DC. Roosevelt himself revealed how obstructive he perceived the revolt, confiding to a friend in a private letter that it was what he had "dreaded".<sup>366</sup> Equating the revolt with "misrule and anarchy", Roosevelt regarded domestic events in Cuba as the opposite of what he had expected from Cuba: order, peace and stability.

In addition to the 1906 August revolt, the response of Cuban President Estrada Palma to the armed uprising against him constituted another obstruction of US expectations of order, peace and stability. First, contrary to what Roosevelt expected from Palma, the Cuban President proved unable to quell the insurrection and prevent Cuba from moving closer to a full-fledged civil war. To be sure, President Palma confronted the rebels and tried to curb the revolt by issuing a decree on August 20, just a few days after the outbreak of the revolt, that ordered an increase of the size of the rural guard, Cuba's prime military institution, to "2000 more members",<sup>367</sup> increasing the pressure on the rebels by forming a "temporary national militia" in support and under the command of the rural guard five days later,<sup>368</sup> by granting amnesty and an assurance of "no further molestation" to rebels "who voluntarily lay down the

---

<sup>363</sup> Root to Eliot, June 18, 1906, in Jessup, *Elihu Root: 1845-1909*, Vol. 1, 530.

<sup>364</sup> While the American Chargé d'Affaires Jacop Sleeper reported from Havana on August 21, 1906 that the outbreak of the rebellion five days earlier was "more serious than the [Cuban] Government cares to admit", he was nevertheless convinced that there was "no reason why the [Cuban] Government should not crush the revolt with the resources at its disposal". "Dispatch No. 157", August, 21, 1906, *PRFRUS 1906*, Part 1, 455.

<sup>365</sup> Telegram from Steinhart to the White House, September 14, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 1: Letters and Related Material, 1759-1919*, reel 68, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>366</sup> Roosevelt to Trevelyan, September 9, 1906 in Morison, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt: The Big Stick, 1907-1909*, 401.

<sup>367</sup> Decree by Tomas Estrada Palma, August 20, 1906, *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 1: Letters and Related Material, 1759-1919*, reel 67. Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>368</sup> "Translation of Decree No. 370", August 25, 1906, *PRFRUS 1906*, Part 1, 458.

arms of themselves" and return to their homes,<sup>369</sup> and finally by declaring martial law and suspending pertinent parts of the Cuban constitution.<sup>370</sup> These measures, however, proved ineffective. According to Jacob Sleeper, American Chargé d'Affaires in Havana, Palma's amnesty order did not have the "anticipated effect"<sup>371</sup>, leading to "alarming rumors relative to attack in Havana and accompanied by internal disorder" and President Palma admitting to his inability to "guarantee protection to lives and property".<sup>372</sup> Confirming these rumors, Secretary of War Taft reported to the White House on September 20 that the Cuban government only controlled "coast towns and provincial capitals" with "[a]narchy elsewhere".<sup>373</sup> Second, in addition to the government's difficulties in putting down the rebellion, Palma proved to be obstructive to American designs for Cuba in another respect: he was surprisingly stubborn and unwilling to negotiate a compromise with the rebels in order to solve the Cuban crisis peacefully. Worse still, confronted with ever-growing resistance to his rule, Palma chose to resign from office.<sup>374</sup>

#### *Roosevelt's Perception of Cuban Obstruction*

If the 1906 August revolt and Palma's inability to put it down came as an obstruction to American expectations towards the island, how was this obstruction perceived by the US leadership? This section argues that, based on Roosevelt's expectations of order and stability in Cuba, events in Cuba were not perceived as a Cuban matter, but rather as directed at the United States and fundamentally illegitimate. First, reports from the Cuban mission about the uprising that started on August 16, 1906, quickly drew Roosevelt's attention to Cuba. While he was first cautiously optimistic that US involvement would not be necessary to make Cuba return to peace and stability, his letters reveal how preoccupied he was with political turmoil there. Not only did he identify Cuba as one of two vexing issues in foreign policy, Roosevelt also believed that the rebels were about to destroy the American legacy of successful governance during and transition to independence after the first occupation, in which the US

---

<sup>369</sup> "Enclosure No. 3 to Dispatch No. 162", August 27, 1906, *ibid.*, 459.

<sup>370</sup> Decree No. 380, September 10, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 1: Letters and Related Material, 1759-1919*, reel 68, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>371</sup> "Chargé Sleeper to the Secretary of State", August 30, 1906, *PRFRUS 1906*, Part 1, 461.

<sup>372</sup> Jacob Sleeper to White House, September 13, 1906, *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 1: Letters and Related Material, 1759-1919*, reel 68, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>373</sup> Taft to Roosevelt, September 20, 1906. *William H. Taft Papers, Series 4: William Howard Taft-Theodore Roosevelt Correspondence, 1897-1918*, reel 320, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>374</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba: A History of the Second Intervention, 1906-1909*, 53-55, Millett, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909*, 96-97.



"of course kept everything straight and decent in the island".<sup>375</sup> Roosevelt's sense was that the revolt was not exclusively directed at the Cuban President, but just as much at the United States and its purported achievements in Cuba. When Taft suggested that the rebels were "in arms against the United States",<sup>376</sup> Roosevelt urged Taft not to make public statements that would give this impression, but agreed with Taft's interpretation of the United States being the rebels' main target.<sup>377</sup> What supported the conviction that the Cuban insurrectionists had not only an axe to grind with President Palma, but also with the US government, was Roosevelt and his government's expectations towards Cuba that made nominally domestic events in the island an important matter of concern to the United States. As much as Roosevelt was uninterested in annexing the island to US territory, his expansive notion of US responsibilities towards Cuba in case of what he had called "chronic wrongdoing" in his articulation of the Roosevelt Corollary, blurred the lines between Cuba and the US both geographically and mentally, leading to a view that made events in Cuba an immediate concern to the US.<sup>378</sup> In fact, expectations were so expansive that Elihu Root compared the 1906 intervention with the US government sending federal troops into a US state to quell an uprising and declare martial law.<sup>379</sup> As early as 1902, Root called Cuba an "intermediate state", arguing that

although it is technically a foreign country, practically and morally it occupies an intermediate position, since we [the US] have required it to become a part of our [the US'] political and military system.<sup>380</sup>

Similarly, in a response to an inquiry made by Taft into whether Roosevelt could intervene without the explicit permission of Congress, the judge advocate general of the War Department drew an analogy between a possible intervention in Cuba and two occasions in which the US President intervened in Panama, but also argued that past federal actions against insurrections in US states constituted ample precedent for intervention, suggesting a minimum level of similarities between the domestic and Cuban context.<sup>381</sup> That Roosevelt perceived the 1906 August revolt as an act of aggression not only directed at the Cuban, but

---

<sup>375</sup> Roosevelt to Trevelyan, September 9, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Subseries 3B: Additional Copies of Letters Sent, 1888-1915*, reel 413, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>376</sup> Taft to Roosevelt, September 25, 1906, *ibid.*

<sup>377</sup> Roosevelt to Taft, September 26, 1906, *ibid.*

<sup>378</sup> This perception was not self-evident, as the examples of Foraker and Bryan's attitude towards US interventionism show.

<sup>379</sup> Root added that in such a case "the authority of the military commander supersedes the ordinary agencies of government" without violating the state's sovereignty. Root to A.K. McClure, October 26, 1906, in Jessup, *Elihu Root: 1845-1909, Vol. 1*, 537.

<sup>380</sup> Root to Carnegie, March 20, 1902, in *ibid.*, 327.

<sup>381</sup> Judge advocate general to Taft, September 15, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 1: Letters and Related Material, 1759-1919*, reel 68, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

also at his own government, flew directly from his previously defined expectations towards order, stability and peace that lent high significance to domestic events in Cuba.

Second, Roosevelt considered the Cuban insurrection as highly illegitimate. In his view, the rebellion against President Palma was not only obstructive to American designs centering on order and peace in the island, it was also perceived as lacking any legitimating basis. Roosevelt expressed his disdain for the rebels in a private letter to a friend, arguing that the rebels were "not suffering from any real grievance whatsoever" and that they had "deliberately plunged the country [Cuba] into civil war".<sup>382</sup> In another confidential letter to Senator Foraker on September 28, one day ahead of sending US marines to Cuba, the American President expressed his "indignation with the insurgents", repeating that he did not consider the rebels' "grievances as justifying, or coming anywhere near justifying, their plunging the country [Cuba] into possible destruction by an insurrection".<sup>383</sup> That Roosevelt disapproved of the uprising in such stark terms was more a consequence of how he judged such actions against the backdrop of his own designs and expectations for Cuba, rather than of a careful assessment of the underlying causes of the insurrection. His regarding the uprising as illegitimate and wrongful is all the more remarkable, considering that there was ample evidence of the existence of grievances and particularly election fraud in the previous presidential election, acknowledged by Taft after his sending to Havana in a telegram to Roosevelt. According to Taft, "the Palma government flagrantly and openly used and abused its power to carry elections and in so doing removed many municipal officers in many parts of [the] Island", leaving a "deep impression on [the] minds of people" and leading the Liberal party to "withdraw their [presidential] candidate from [the] main election" after they had experienced such "fraud and violence and terrorism".<sup>384</sup> Indeed, the presidential election of 1905 produced a "bitter struggle" between the Moderates and the Liberals who accused Palma of "resorting to violence, intimidation, and bribery to retain his position".<sup>385</sup> Election fraud was so evident and corruption so widespread that, according to Faustino Guerra Puente, leader of the insurrectionists, "[i]f the American people had to endure such a Government as Palma's is to-day, they would not permit it to remain in power five days".<sup>386</sup> Roosevelt,

---

<sup>382</sup> Roosevelt to Eliot, September 13, 1906, in Morison, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt: The Big Stick, 1907-1909*, 410.

<sup>383</sup> Roosevelt to Foraker, September 28, 1906, in *ibid.*, 430.

<sup>384</sup> Telegram Taft to Roosevelt, September 21, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series I: Letters and Related Material, 1759-1919*, reel 68, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>385</sup> Graham H. Stuart, *Latin America and the United States* (New York: Century 1922), 173-174. See also Pérez, *Cuba Under the Platt Amendment, 1902-1934*, 92-94.

<sup>386</sup> Faustino Guerra Puente, "Causes of the Cuban Insurrection," *The North American Review* 183, no. 599 (1906): 540. Even Talcott Williams, who reduced the causes of the insurrection to the large proportion of the

however, disregarded such grievances, perceiving the revolt as an illegitimate obstruction to his expectation of order and peace in Cuba.

### *Roosevelt's Emotional Frustration*

Roosevelt's perception of Cuban obstruction as both illegitimate and directed at the United States led to considerable frustration. By the time the American President landed marines on Cuban soil, his emotional state was notably marked by high levels of emotional arousal, even anger. While, in public statements, he made sure to convey how worried he was about developments in Cuba without giving the impression of being overly involved emotionally, Roosevelt made no efforts to hide his feelings in his private correspondence with friends. Once it was clear that the insurrection posed a real threat to the constitutional order of the Cuban republic, an exasperated Roosevelt ranted in a private letter from September 13, 1906:

I am so angry with that infernal little Cuban republic that I would like to wipe its people off the face of the earth. All we have wanted from them was that they would behave themselves and be prosperous and happy.<sup>387</sup>

The obstructive nature of the revolt threatened Roosevelt's vision of Cuba as peaceful, safe, and prosperous, but what made his frustration emotional was how he perceived the obstruction: in the next sentence of the same letter, Roosevelt argued that the insurrectionists had started "an utterly unjustifiable and pointless revolution" that, as he wisely predicted, "may get things into such a snarl that we [the US] have no alternative save to intervene".<sup>388</sup> One day before the intervention, Roosevelt confessed that he was "bitterly disappointed" that the Cubans should bear the brunt of "the criminal folly of this insurrection".<sup>389</sup> His disgust and contempt for the insurrectionists was still palpable after the actual invasion. In October 1906, he wrote to his son that it was hard to tell when "those ridiculous dagos [Cubans] would flare up over some totally unexpected trouble and start to cutting one another's throat".<sup>390</sup>

One may wonder why Roosevelt's frustration over the threat to stability posed by the Cuban insurrection led to his decision to not only intervene against the insurrectionists, but

---

black population in Cuba, arguing that a "resort to arms by a defeated political party is mere politics to the Spanish temperament", conceded that the result of Palma's reelection in 1905 "was certain before the polls were opened". Talcott Williams, "The Causes of Cuban Insurrection," *The Outlook* 84, no. 3 (1906): 111, 113. As for evidence for election fraud, in conversations with the William Taft and Robert Bacon in Havana, two officials from the Cuban government "admitted rigging the 1905 elections". See Millett, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909*, 95.

<sup>387</sup> Roosevelt to White, September 13, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 2:Letterpress Copybooks, 1897-1916*, reel 343, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>388</sup> Ibid.

<sup>389</sup> Roosevelt to Foraker, September 28, 1906. Ibid.

<sup>390</sup> Roosevelt to Kermit Roosevelt, October 23, 1906. Ibid.

against the Cuban constitutional order altogether, which he had helped put in place in the first place. Roosevelt could have, after all, propped up the Palma government in its fight against the rebels. Even if difficult, this was certainly possible.<sup>391</sup> Yet, Roosevelt eventually intervened against the young Cuban polity in its entirety, as he was just as much frustrated with Palma as with the revolt the Cuban President was desperately trying to fight off. Palma's refusal to agree to a compromise solution and peace proposal painstakingly worked out by Taft and Bacon caused so much frustration in Roosevelt that he called the Palma government "utterly unreasonable" one day before he ordered the intervention.<sup>392</sup> Roosevelt, who generally thought highly of Palma, was shocked to see how stubborn the Cuban President proved to be, showing no willingness to strike a deal with the insurrectionists,<sup>393</sup> and accused Palma of not acting "like a patriot" and being "sulky".<sup>394</sup> Taft shared this interpretation, reporting from Havana that Palma and the Moderates would "take away their dolls and not play".<sup>395</sup> What made Roosevelt furious was his conviction that Palma's obstinacy stemmed from his desire to drag the US into the government's armed conflict with the Liberals, arguing that the Palma government had "evidently been bent upon forcing us [the US] to an armed intervention in their support".<sup>396</sup> He disapproved of Palma's decision to leave power, considered it irresponsible and blamed the Cuban President of leaving his country "in absolute chaos".<sup>397</sup> Had the American President not perceived Palma's obstructive behavior as unpatriotic, irresponsible, and as an attempt to drag the US government into the violent standoff, his response would have been quite different:

---

<sup>391</sup> As Louis Perez argues, "only the direct deployment of U.S. combat forces could have maintained Estrada Palma in power". See Pérez, *Cuba Under the Platt Amendment, 1902-1934*, 104. Lockmiller argues that "if the United States had supported Estrada Palma during the August Revolution of 1906 [...], the second intervention would not have been necessary". See Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba: A History of the Second Intervention, 1906-1909*, 61.

<sup>392</sup> Roosevelt to Foraker, September 28, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 2:Letterpress Copybooks, 1897-1916*, reel 343, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>393</sup> Roosevelt called Palma and the Moderates "obstinate". See Roosevelt to Taft, September 25, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Subseries 3B: Additional Copies of Letters Sent, 1888-1915*, reel 413, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. For Roosevelt's being furious at Palma's stubbornness, see Collin, *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean: The Panama Canal, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Latin American Context*, 535-536.

<sup>394</sup> Roosevelt to Taft, September 25, 1906, in Morison, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt: The Big Stick, 1907-1909*, 423. Interestingly, while Roosevelt found Palma's preference for resignation over a peaceful compromise with the rebels unpatriotic, Robert Bacon and William Taft noted after the onset of the American occupation that Palma was "most anxious for the prosperity of his country". See Taft and Bacon to Roosevelt, October 3, 1906. *William H. Taft Papers, Series 4: William Howard Taft-Theodore Roosevelt Correspondence, 1897-1918*, reel 320, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>395</sup> Taft to Roosevelt, September 26, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 1: Letters and Related Material, 1759-1919*, reel 68, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>396</sup> Roosevelt to Foraker, September 28, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Series 2:Letterpress Copybooks, 1897-1916*, reel 343, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>397</sup> Roosevelt to Taft, September 26, 1906, in Morison, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt: The Big Stick, 1907-1909*, 424.

[i]f the Palma government had [...] a sincere purpose to remedy the wrongs of which your [Taft's] telegrams show that they have been guilty [Palma's obstinacy and attempt to force US intervention in his support], I should have been inclined to stand by them no matter to what extent.<sup>398</sup>

In Roosevelt's view, there could not have been another reason for Palma's decision to resign. That Palma did not want to accede to the US peace proposal because his "dignity, his concept of duty [...] would not allow him to compromise for the sake of political expediency",<sup>399</sup> as Lockmiller argues, rather than because he was simply unpatriotic, trying to get the United States involved, was something that Roosevelt did not consider. Had he done so, his reaction might have been less furious and his decision regarding intervention different.

### **Alternative Explanations for Regime Change in Cuba**

To compare the plausibility of the argument that Roosevelt's emotional frustration was the driving force for intervention, this section critically assesses alternative arguments prevalent in the literature about the sources of the 1906 intervention, grouping them together into three arguments that dovetail with general approaches concerning US intervention and expansion.<sup>400</sup>

The first alternative argument about the sources of the 1906 intervention in Cuba centers on US security concerns and the geopolitical context of the beginning of the twentieth century. Following the logic of defensive realism,<sup>401</sup> the 1906 August revolt and the ensuing political crisis in Cuba were, according to this view, a threat to US national security because of a possible intensification of international tensions between the US and European powers. The US feared, so the argument goes, that an unstable Cuba shattered by domestic chaos would invite foreign power intervention that in turn would jeopardize US regional hegemony, potentially rendering the Monroe Doctrine and the Roosevelt Corollary meaningless.<sup>402</sup> These

---

<sup>398</sup> Roosevelt to Taft, September 26, 1906. *Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Subseries 3B: Additional Copies of Letters Sent, 1888-1915*, reel 413, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>399</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba: A History of the Second Intervention, 1906-1909*, 56.

<sup>400</sup> The categorization follows and expands on Dueck's discussion of approaches about US expansion around the beginning of the twentieth century. See Dueck, "The Sources of American Expansion."

<sup>401</sup> Essentially, to the extent that defensive realism speaks to the foreign policy of states, it argues that states maximize power whenever they feel threatened by other states. Intervention and expansion are thus a consequence of threats to the national security of the acting state. For famous formulations and applications of this idea, be it about international politics or foreign policy, see Herz, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma.", Barry Posen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), Stephen M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987).

<sup>402</sup> James R. Holmes, *Theodore Roosevelt and World Order: Police Power in International Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books, 2006), 164, Dana G. Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), vii, Thomas, *Cuba: Or the Pursuit of Freedom*, 476.

fears were a response to European involvement in the Western hemisphere, which was everything but unprecedented and therefore fueled American weariness about a possible confrontation with European powers. Especially the Anglo-German debt collection intervention in Venezuela in 1902 demonstrated European willingness to pursue own interests in the Western hemisphere.<sup>403</sup> Two years later in 1904, Roosevelt, "concerned with keeping some other power, such as Britain, from intervening",<sup>404</sup> intervened himself in the Dominican Republic to collect and manage the country's European-held sovereign debt.<sup>405</sup> With respect to Cuba, the geographic proximity of the island to the United States made the prospect of foreign intervention in case of domestic instability all the more worrisome.

The security-concern argument seems plausible at first glance. After all, technological change and the onset of widespread industrialization enabled states to project power more easily, propelling "European forces and interests across the oceans, and potentially closer to the United States".<sup>406</sup> Yet, evidence for the American fear of European intervention in Cuba is scarce. To be sure, Roosevelt repeatedly invoked this line of argument in public statements. In his fourth annual message to Congress, for example, Roosevelt argued that nations in the Western hemisphere that did not fulfill their state responsibilities, could potentially invite "foreign aggression to the detriment of the entire body of American nations".<sup>407</sup> Roosevelt's private correspondence, however, belies any serious apprehension about European involvement on the part of the US President. When informed by Taft on the day of Palma's resignation that "foreign consuls [in Havana] are about to take action with their own governments as to intervention",<sup>408</sup> Roosevelt responded pointedly:

I should not be at all sorry to have the foreign consuls act as to intervention of their governments, as you [Taft] state that they will, because it would make our [the US'] course even clearer and give us an even more complete justification.<sup>409</sup>

---

<sup>403</sup> Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, 28, Howard C. Hill, *Roosevelt and the Caribbean* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927), 106-147, Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 66-77, Michael Tomz, *Reputation and International Cooperation: Sovereign Debt Across Three Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 133-135.

<sup>404</sup> Saunders, *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions*, 188.

<sup>405</sup> With respect to the Dominican intervention of 1904, Langley similarly argues that "Roosevelt was determined to prevent foreign intervention", see Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 23.

<sup>406</sup> Dueck, "The Sources of American Expansion," 179.

<sup>407</sup> Roosevelt, *Fourth Annual Message, December 4* ([cited]).

<sup>408</sup> Taft to Roosevelt, September 28, 1906, in William H. Taft and Robert Bacon, *Cuban Pacification: Report of William H. Taft, Secretary of War, and Robert Bacon, Assistant Secretary of State, Annual Reports of the War Department* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1906), 481.

<sup>409</sup> Roosevelt to Taft, September 28, 1906, *ibid.*

As this revealing correspondence shows, just one day before he ordered US marines into Cuba, Roosevelt viewed the attitude of European diplomats in Havana towards European intervention as a welcome support for justifications for his own intervention rather than as an imminent threat to US security. In the days leading to US intervention, Roosevelt was, in the words of Millet, "under no real pressure because Great Britain, France, and Germany believed the United States would protect their nationals without active intercession", making him feel "awkward", not worried, about the lack of foreign interest in Cuba.<sup>410</sup> The second intervention was thus hardly a consequence of a Cuban or European threat to US national security.

Another variant of this argument attributes Roosevelt's intervention to US concerns about the economic interests of US business groups, claiming that the US government was apprehensive of the economic implications of internal instability in Cuba after the August Revolt of 1906, with potential plunder and seizure of funds and treasuries providing on the rise. This view stems from revisionist historiography that treats US foreign policy as a function of economic considerations and imperatives dictated by domestic economic elites.<sup>411</sup> Since foreign property was predominantly American property, reflecting the far-reaching economic relations between the two countries, the Cuban political crisis during the conflict between Liberals and Moderates fueled American apprehensions of a political breakdown and damage to the US economic interests.<sup>412</sup> When the destruction of American property became a possibility, the US responded with armed intervention according to this argument.<sup>413</sup>

US concerns about the economic implications of the Cuban crisis were real. On September 8, 1906, for example, Cuban President Tomas Estrada Palma sent a message to US mission in Havana, conceding that his government "could no longer guarantee the safety of foreign property".<sup>414</sup> These concerns alone, however, did not convince Roosevelt to engage in regime change. While attentive to the state of the US economy, the American President did not define American interests in economic terms, viewing the influence of big business on policymaking with great suspicion. In a letter to his friend Henry Cabot Lodge, Roosevelt

---

<sup>410</sup> Millet, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909*, 98.

<sup>411</sup> The most prominent formulation of the revisionist school of US foreign policy is William A. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1972). See also LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898*.

<sup>412</sup> Pérez, *Cuba Under the Platt Amendment, 1902-1934*, 95.

<sup>413</sup> Louis A. Pérez, "Cuba," in *Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Relations, Vol. 1*, ed. Bruce W. Jentleson and Thomas G. Paterson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 380.

<sup>414</sup> Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 29.

expressed his contempt for politicians who he saw as "beneficiaries of corporate wealth" and as "an appanage to Wall Street", arguing that his foreign policy would be immune to big business influence.<sup>415</sup> Domestically, Roosevelt was known as a "trust buster", filing "43 suits against major corporations and alleged monopolies".<sup>416</sup> With respect to the 1906 intervention in Cuba, there is little evidence that Roosevelt was driven by a concern for the well-being of US economic elites. In fact, the American President was so suspicious about such elites that "[o]ne of his major worries was that American business interests had financed the [Cuban] revolt", hardly a suspicion that would have led him to overcome his reluctance to intervene.<sup>417</sup>

The third alternative argument attributes the 1906 intervention in Cuba to Roosevelt's imperialist posture and his expansionist tendencies. Drawing from offensive realism,<sup>418</sup> this approach treats the Cuban crisis triggered by the 1906 August revolt not as a threat to the US, but rather as an opportunity for imperialism and expansion. That states "look for opportunities to take advantage of one another" and "act offensively to amass as much power as [they] can"<sup>419</sup> was, according to this view, exemplified by Theodore Roosevelt's foreign policy. An "unabashed expansionist"<sup>420</sup> and "early imperialist"<sup>421</sup> with a "'big stick' approach to foreign policy"<sup>422</sup> and an "almost indecent enthusiasm for U.S. participation in a world organized by force and power",<sup>423</sup> Roosevelt is portrayed as a confident President "intrigued with power, with the problems of power, and with rivalries for power".<sup>424</sup> With regard to the Cuban intervention of 1906, this approach argues that Cuban domestic turmoil came as a

<sup>415</sup> Roosevelt to Lodge, September 28, 1906, in Morison, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt: The Big Stick, 1907-1909*, 429.

<sup>416</sup> Tim McNeese, *The U.S. Presidency* (St. Louis: Milliken Publishing Company, 2001), 60.

<sup>417</sup> Millett, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909*, 97.

<sup>418</sup> As opposed to defensive realism, offensive realism predicts that states will use force and expand whenever they have the opportunity to do so, i.e. when they have higher material capabilities than their opponent and expect net benefits from offensive action. The most prominent structural formulation of this theory is Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*. Hans Morgenthau, whose approach is sometimes labeled classical realism, attributes offensive state behavior not to the dynamics of international anarchy, but rather to human nature. See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 7th ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005 [1948]). Probably the earliest formulation of the link between capabilities and offensive intentions is Thucydides' Melian dialog, in which the Athenians told the Melians that "the strong do what they can", see Thucydides, *The Complete Writings of Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War* (New York: The Modern Library, 1934), 331.

<sup>419</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 35.

<sup>420</sup> Fareed Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 164.

<sup>421</sup> Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, 82.

<sup>422</sup> Serge Ricard, "The Roosevelt Corollary," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2006): 18.

<sup>423</sup> Ninkovich, "Roosevelt, Theodore: Civilization as Ideology," 221. Note that Ninkovich argues that this quoted view is inaccurate and does not do justice to Roosevelt's foreign policy posture.

<sup>424</sup> Howard K. Beale, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1956), 449-450. For a similar view, see Robert E. Osgood, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1953), 27-28.



godsend to Roosevelt who, by dispatching troops to Cuba, "took advantage of [the] clearly stated theoretical right to intervene [the Platt Amendment]".<sup>425</sup>

While the opportunity-for-expansion argument fits neatly with the dominant narrative about Theodore Roosevelt's braggadocio, it is a hardly convincing explanation for the President's decision to interpose US troops between the two warring factions in Cuba and occupy the island for more than two years. More specifically, the argument about the link between capabilities and expansion is unconvincing, since it grossly overstates Roosevelt's appetite for intervention. Rather than welcoming an opportunity to occupy Cuba, Roosevelt was extraordinarily reluctant to respond to the Cuban crisis by force and intervention. This is documented in his private correspondence with friends and confidants. Opposed to any form of expansion, Roosevelt wrote on September 9, 1906: "I loathe the thought of assuming any control over the island [Cuba] such as we [the US] have over Porto Rico and the Philippines".<sup>426</sup> Instead of intervening at the first opportune moment, the American President wanted to "exhaust all possible means [...] before we [the US] go into the business of armed intervention".<sup>427</sup> Supporting the Cuban veterans in their attempt at effecting a compromise between Palma and the rebels<sup>428</sup> and subsequently sending his Secretary of War and assistant Secretary of State to the island to reach a political settlement,<sup>429</sup> Roosevelt had indeed tried many different options before finally resorting to force.

## Conclusion

The 1906 intervention in Cuba was an unlikely event. Despite the Platt Amendment and the codified right of the United States to intervene in Cuba in case of domestic instability, Roosevelt was determined to avoid a military intervention. Once he did send US marines to Cuba, he did not support the constitutionally legitimate government, but decided to dismantle the constitutional structure of the island altogether and then occupy the island. As this chapter has shown, Roosevelt would have been unlikely to use force to engage in regime change, had he not been so frustrated with the 1906 August revolt, Palma's inability to quell it, his obstinacy in peace negotiations, and finally his decision to resign from the presidency. Roosevelt's expectations of Cuban order, stability, and prosperity coupled with the perception of Cuban obstruction as directed at the US and highly illegitimate, contributed to his high

---

<sup>425</sup> Zakaria, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role*, 169.

<sup>426</sup> Roosevelt to Trevelyan, September 9, 1906, in Morison, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt: The Big Stick, 1907-1909*, 401.

<sup>427</sup> Roosevelt to Taft, September 25, 1906, in *ibid.*, 423.

<sup>428</sup> Lockmiller, *Magoon in Cuba: A History of the Second Intervention, 1906-1909*, 38-39.

<sup>429</sup> Pérez, *Cuba Under the Platt Amendment, 1902-1934*, 98-99.

levels of frustration. Without the need to receive approval from Congress, Roosevelt used force when deemed necessary and responded to his frustration by engaging in regime change, punishing both Palma's Moderates and the insurgent Liberals.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### The 1909 – 1912 Intervention in Nicaragua

One month after the end of the Cuban occupation, Theodore Roosevelt's term as US President came to an end. His successor, William Howard Taft assumed office in March 1909. Hand-picked by the outgoing President and his fellow Republican,<sup>430</sup> Taft "promised to continue Roosevelt's reform program"<sup>431</sup> and to live up to his decisive 1908 electoral victory, as "[m]any voters had chosen Taft with the explicit understanding that he would continue Roosevelt's policies".<sup>432</sup> In his foreign policy towards the Western hemisphere, Taft set out to adopt Roosevelt's approach towards the Dominican Republic that involved an intervention in 1905 to bring about stability in the island by overseeing the Dominican collection of customs and its repayment of debts.<sup>433</sup> In what came to be known as dollar diplomacy, i.e. the attempt at creating US financial oversight in unstable countries with, in the words of Taft himself, the goal of avoiding "revolutions by assisting [Central American] Republics to rehabilitate their finances, to establish their currency on a stable basis, to remove the customhouses from the danger of revolutions [...] and to establish reliable banks",<sup>434</sup> Taft thus planned the use of financial means to achieve foreign policy ends.<sup>435</sup>

Despite Taft's dollar diplomacy, the American President soon found himself interfering with the domestic governance structure of foreign countries and even using armed force, overshadowing the most aggressive and expansionist depictions of Roosevelt's handling of the Western hemisphere. Nowhere became Taft's resort to the use of force more evident than in Nicaragua where, at the height of an American regime change operation in

---

<sup>430</sup> Raymond Tatalovich, Travis Cook, and Scott Yenor, "The Constitutional Presidency: Conservative Scholarship and Energy in the Executive," in *The Presidency Then and Now*, ed. Phillip G. Henderson (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 95.

<sup>431</sup> Miller Center, *American President: A Reference Resource* ([cited August 15 2014]); available from <http://millercenter.org/president/taft/essays/biography/1>. For an overview of the progressive reform movement and its clashes with conservative Republicans, see Lewis L. Gould, *America in the Progressive Era, 1890-1914* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>432</sup> Tom Lansford, *Theodore Roosevelt in Perspective* (New York: Novinka Books, 2005), 115.

<sup>433</sup> Cyrus Veaser, "Inventing Dollar Diplomacy: The Gilded-Age Origins of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine," *Diplomatic History* 27, no. 3 (2003). See also Thomas M. Leonard, *Central America and the United States: The Search for Stability* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1991), 60-61.

<sup>434</sup> William H. Taft, *Fourth Annual Message, December 3* (1912 [cited August 15, 2014]); available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29553>.

<sup>435</sup> For classic treatments of dollar diplomacy and Taft's foreign policy, see Donald F. Anderson, *William Howard Taft: A Conservative's Conception of the Presidency* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), Paolo E. Coletta, *The Presidency of William Howard Taft* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1973), Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, Scott Nearing and Joseph Freeman, *Dollar Diplomacy: A Study in American Imperialism* (New York: B.W. Huebsch and the Viking Press, 1925).

1912, Taft ordered "at that time the largest American armed force ever to land on foreign soil in peacetime".<sup>436</sup> Initially planning on exclusively using non-military means to achieve foreign policy goals, Taft had become a proven regime changer. Why? What made the American President who "believed in the creation of a more peaceful and prosperous world order through the promotion of international law, trade, and investment", and whose proverbial dollars were "the primary means of a foreign policy based on the classical liberal assumption that the international system could be modernized and pacified through the benign effects of commerce and investment",<sup>437</sup> resort to the most intrusive form of intervention: regime change?

This chapter shows that Taft's decision to practice regime change in Nicaragua was a consequence of his intense frustration with the Nicaraguan President Jose Santos Zelaya. His and his Secretary of State Philander C. Knox' perceptions of Zelaya's foreign policy and domestic economic policies as illegitimate and directed at the United States made Taft first resort to diplomatic pressure, the withdrawal of diplomatic recognition, support for an armed anti-Zelaya insurgency, and finally the interjection of US forces into Nicaragua. Frustration with Zelaya was so strong that even his elected successor Jose Madriz, untainted by any direct association with Zelaya, became the target of Taft's emotional reaction to the obstruction caused by Zelaya. Rather than supporting the Madriz government and terminating his support for the rebels, Taft continued with his regime change operation, even adding a third episode to the campaign when he forcibly prevented pro-Zelaya rebels from retaking power in 1912, thereby putting the final nail in the coffin of dollar diplomacy, his often-cited attempt at substituting "dollars for bullets".<sup>438</sup>

The outline of the chapter goes as follows: the following section presents the US regime change operation in Nicaragua as a series of interventions from 1909 to 1912. Section Two presents the main argument of the chapter, describing how the US government's expectations towards Nicaragua experienced a subtle expansion when Taft came into power, how and with what actions exactly Zelaya obstructed these expectations; explaining how such obstruction was perceived by the two US governments, and finally showing the emotional state of frustration Taft experienced after Zelaya's continued obstruction. Section Three turns to alternative explanations for US regime change in Nicaragua, discussing arguments inspired

---

<sup>436</sup> Healy, *Drive to Hegemony: The United States in the Caribbean, 1898-1917*, 159.

<sup>437</sup> Colin Dueck, *Hard Line: The Republican Party and U.S. Foreign Policy Since World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 16.

<sup>438</sup> This famous formulation was used by Francis M. Huntington Wilson, Taft's assistant Secretary of State, in a 1911 speech. See Francis M. Huntington Wilson, *Memoirs of an Ex-Diplomat* (Boston: Bruce Humphries, 1945), 216.

by defensive realism, economic interest arguments, and offensive realism, and arguing that each of these arguments is empirically inadequate. Section Four concludes by showing how Taft failed to implement his foreign policy of dollar diplomacy in Nicaragua.

### **The Outcome: A Series of Interventions**

US regime change in Nicaragua comprised three episodes from December 1909 to November 1912. While some accounts treat cases of US interference in that period separately, only a look at the whole picture reveals the scope of the regime change operation and shows how the US pursued its intervention goals. Regime change in Nicaragua proved to be a slow process that experienced the deposing of three leaders, thereby changing the nature of the country's authority structure over a period of three years. Each episode of US interference reveals how profoundly Nicaraguan affairs were subject to US influence, but taken together, the various episodes of intervention bring to the fore the comprehensiveness of the United States' meddling in Nicaraguan politics. The result of regime change in Nicaragua was the overthrow of the Liberal Party's sixteen years of rule, and the establishment of what has been referred to as the "first protectorate of the United States over an existing Central American country".<sup>439</sup>

The succession of irregular leadership changes in Nicaragua between 1909 and 1911 was a result of constant domestic power struggles and US interference. The first episode of interference began in December 1909, a time when Nicaragua had already plunged into civil war. An armed revolt led by the governor of Nicaragua's Zelaya Department in eastern Nicaragua, Juan Jose Estrada, started two months earlier in October 1909, challenging the regime of the incumbent liberal President Jose Santos Zelaya. Uprisings of these kinds were no rarity at the time: General Juan Reyes, one of Estrada's predecessors as governor of Zelaya, had launched an anti-Zelaya revolt in February 1899, but was decisively beaten by government forces after the initial seizing of the Department's capital, Bluefields.<sup>440</sup>

Despite the frequent occurrence of rebellions, Estrada's 1909 revolt was different from previous uprisings in that it experienced US involvement. On December 1, Secretary of State Philander C. Knox issued a remarkable note to the Nicaraguan Chargé d'Affaires in Washington, which has come to be simply known as the Knox Note. In a language unusually blunt for diplomatic standards, the note denigrated the Nicaraguan regime as a "blot upon the

---

<sup>439</sup> Benjamin Harrison, "The United States and the 1909 Nicaragua Revolution," *Caribbean Quarterly* 41, no. 3/4 (1995): 45.

<sup>440</sup> Karl Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848* (Boston: South End Press, 1986), 136.

history of Nicaragua"<sup>441</sup> and more importantly, unilaterally suspended US recognition of the Nicaraguan regime. That the US, in the words of Philander Knox, no longer felt "for the Government of President Zelaya that respect and confidence which would make it appropriate hereafter to maintain with it regular diplomatic relations"<sup>442</sup> dealt the liberal regime under Zelaya a heavy blow at a time when the country was in the midst of domestic turmoil. The domestic uprising that the regime was confronted with was not unknown to Knox, but rather a condition that he consciously embraced. Coming down on the side of Estrada's revolt, Knox asserted that "the United States is convinced that the revolution represents the ideas and the will of the majority of the Nicaraguan people more faithfully than does the government of President Zelaya".<sup>443</sup> Moreover, Knox demanded the establishment of a new Nicaraguan government "entirely dissociated from the present intolerable conditions",<sup>444</sup> which the US Secretary of State treated as the main precondition for reestablishing diplomatic relations with Nicaragua. The Knox Note did thus not only discredit the Zelaya's regime, it simultaneously supported and emboldened the regime's domestic adversaries. Along with the note, US gunboats and cruisers were stationed off the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua in order to underscore the seriousness of Knox's statements.<sup>445</sup>

The consequence of Knox's forceful statement was the resignation of President Jose Zelaya on December 16, 1909. It came after futile attempts on the part of the Nicaraguan President to accommodate US demands by proposing a commission be formed and investigate conditions in Nicaragua and by promising to resign if evidence of any government wrongdoing could be found.<sup>446</sup> Once it became clear that the proposal had fallen on deaf ears, Zelaya, a few days later, submitted his resignation to the Nicaraguan congress and linked his departure to US interference. Expressing his reasons for resignation in a farewell speech, Zelaya accused the US of supporting the rebels and unjustly interfering in the domestic affairs of the country and understood the act of resigning as a blow to the United States, to which he did "not wish to give a pretext for intervention".<sup>447</sup> To be sure, despite Zelaya's accusations of US interference, he was not directly coerced out of office. Though the US

---

<sup>441</sup> The Secretary of State to the Nicaraguan Chargé, December 1, 1909. *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States (PRFRUS) 1909*, 455.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*, 456.

<sup>443</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>444</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>445</sup> "The United States and Nicaragua: The Government's Attitude," *The Times*, December 3 1909.

<sup>446</sup> President Zelaya to President Taft, received December 17, 1909. *Philander C. Knox Papers, State Department File 1909-1913*, Box 39, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. See also "The United States and Nicaragua: President Zelaya's Reply to Mr. Knox," *The Times*, December 6 1909.

<sup>447</sup> "Zelaya Resigns, Denouncing US," *New York Times*, December 17 1909. See also "Manifesto of President Zelaya to the National Assembly", December 17, 1909, *PRFRUS 1909*, 459.

navy was stationed off the coast and was ready to intervene, no US marine had set foot on Nicaraguan soil before Zelaya's departure. Nor did the rebels in the eastern province, who in fact appeared to be on the losing end just a few days before Zelaya's resignation,<sup>448</sup> prove to be strong enough to oust the President. Yet, by withdrawing American recognition, the Knox Note did not only put both factions of the civil war, the regime and its opponents, on equal footing in terms of US recognition, but also rendered the preservation of Zelaya's regime prohibitively costly in the long-term, signaling to Nicaragua that the "United States would not rest until Zelaya was gone".<sup>449</sup>

Zelaya's resignation did not put an end to the domestic struggle for power in Nicaragua. His presidential successor, Jose Madriz, was elected by the Nicaraguan congress and took office on December 22, 1909, but was neither recognized by the rebels nor by the United States. Being member of the Liberal party and Zelaya's personal choice for succession, Madriz was seen as a puppet that would continue Zelaya's policies. Even the fact that the new President had been a well-respected judge of the Central American court before assuming office did not prevent the US from opposing his coming into power. US opposition went so far as to disapprove other states' recognition of the Madriz administration.<sup>450</sup> The following months were marked by unsuccessful peace negotiations between the two factions and failed American mediation attempts, while fighting continued unabated. The persistent American non-recognition of the Nicaraguan regime and US support for the rebels emboldened Estrada's revolt, but could not weaken Madriz materially, which put the US in a delicate and uncertain position. While neither Nicaraguan side could decide the domestic struggle militarily, the United States abstained from intervening with its own forces.<sup>451</sup>

After months of deadlock, the United States finally intervened militarily in May 1910, tilting the domestic balance of the two Nicaraguan factions towards the rebels. Up until the intervention, the Madriz government had slowly gained the upper hand vis-à-vis the conservative uprising led by Estrada to such an extent that the American consul at Bluefields, the capital of Zelaya Department, reported back to Washington that the revolt had "practically collapsed".<sup>452</sup> To make matters worse for the rebels, who had retreated to Bluefields, the only city they were yet holding, the Madriz administration acquired a new gunboat and sent it to Bluefields where it seized the customs house and declared a blockade of the port, effectively

---

<sup>448</sup> "The United States and Nicaragua," *The Times*, December 13 1909.

<sup>449</sup> Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, 68.

<sup>450</sup> "Not to Recognize Madriz," *New York Times*, December 31 1909.

<sup>451</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 179-181.

<sup>452</sup> Thomas P. Moffat, March 1, 1910, quoted in *ibid.*, 180.

cutting the rebels' supply route.<sup>453</sup> At that time, government forces outnumbered the rebels four-fold.<sup>454</sup> The heightened vulnerability of the rebels and the imminent seaborne bombardment by Madriz' forces prompted the US to action. The commander of one of the American gunboats patrolling off the coast of Bluefields did not permit the *Maximo Jerez*, the newly-acquired Nicaraguan warship, to land troops or assault the city. In case of a bombardment, the naval officer "threatened the captain of the *Maximo Jerez* to fire at and sink her if our [Madriz'] troops attempted to attack Bluefields".<sup>455</sup> In order to make sure that Madriz' military would heed American warnings, the commander of the *USS Paducah* landed 100 US marines in Bluefields,<sup>456</sup> upsetting the regime's attempt at retaking the last rebel stronghold and thereby potentially ending the civil war and extending its rule over the entire Nicaraguan territory. Madriz himself recognized what consequences the US decision to land troops had and expressed his opposition to the US intervention in a letter to US President William H. Taft:

I can see no way in which the above-stated facts [the US intervention] can be reconciled with the principles of neutrality by the law of nations, and [...] I have no hesitation in applying to your Excellency [President Taft] with the respectful request that the orders given to your naval authorities at Bluefields be rectified.<sup>457</sup>

Madriz' plea went unheeded. What is more, US marines completed the humiliation of Madriz' force by disarming only them, but not the rebels, for rebel forces would supposedly shoot outward as opposed to the government forces that "would be firing *toward* us [US marines]".<sup>458</sup> It was because of this blatantly disadvantageous treatment of the Madriz government that, according to David Healy, the "United States Navy took a hand, and quite literally saved the revolution".<sup>459</sup>

The US military intervention of May 1910 and the reverse at Bluefields sealed the fate of Jose Madriz' presidency and ended the sixteen-year-long rule of the Liberal Party. Unable to take the city, the government forces retreated from Bluefields, while the emboldened rebels started a military offensive from their US-provided sanctuary. After decisive rebel victories at Tipitapa and Granada, Madriz' regime collapsed. The liberal President finally

---

<sup>453</sup> Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 148.

<sup>454</sup> Ivan Musicant, *The Banana Wars: A History of United States Military Intervention in Latin America from the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama* (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 141.

<sup>455</sup> The President of Nicaragua to President Taft, June 13, 1910. *PRFRUS 1910*, 751.

<sup>456</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 183.

<sup>457</sup> The President of Nicaragua to President Taft, June 13, 1910. *PRFRUS 1910*, 751.

<sup>458</sup> Musicant, *The Banana Wars: A History of United States Military Intervention in Latin America from the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama*, 141. Emphasis in original

<sup>459</sup> Healy, *Drive to Hegemony: The United States in the Caribbean, 1898-1917*, 155.



resigned on August 20, 1910, just a few days before the rebels reached the capital, Managua, and took control of the city.<sup>460</sup> With the coming into power of Juan Jose Estrada, the second episode of 1909-1912 regime change in Nicaragua was completed. This episode was more far-reaching than the first US intervention of 1909 both in terms of consequences and choice of means. While the US suspended diplomatic recognition of Zelaya's regime with the Knox Note in December 1909, it went one step further in May 1910 by landing troops on Nicaraguan soil. Likewise, the resignation of Zelaya brought another Liberal leader into office, whereas the collapse of Madriz' government ended the rule of the Liberal party altogether.<sup>461</sup> The fall of Jose Madriz was so decisive and the new regime so dependent on the United States that the day of Estrada's inauguration, August 21, 1910, has been regarded as the commencement of "the American rule of Nicaragua, political and economic".<sup>462</sup>

After several crises and a change in leadership from Estrada to Adolfo Diaz, internal turmoil and factional bickering caused another civil war in July 1912.<sup>463</sup> While the 1909-1910 civil war was initiated by Conservatives led by a Liberal, Juan Jose Estrada, this time around it was a conservative, the incumbent Minister of War, Luis Mena, who led a Liberal revolt. Capitalizing on nationalistic sentiments among the Nicaraguan population, Mena, who had already been opposed to Madriz' presidency, seized the opportunity to pursue his own presidential ambitions by siding with Liberal uprisings mounted in various parts of the country. As a response, President Diaz tried to wrest the war ministry from Mena and named Emiliano Chamorro new commander-in-chief in an effort to keep control of the Nicaraguan armed forces, inadvertently causing a split of the armed forces along the two Conservative factions.<sup>464</sup> On July 29, 1912, when fighting broke out, Mena tried to seize Managua, but was forced to retreat, as government forces kept the upper hand. Despite this initial defeat, in the first days of August, Mena managed to take control of large portions of the Nicaraguan railroad system and a number of lake steamers owned by an American company. Soon after, revolutionary forces gained control of major cities like Granada and Leon, blocking the railway line from the capital to the Pacific coast.<sup>465</sup>

---

<sup>460</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 186.

<sup>461</sup> To be sure, Juan Jose Estrada, the new Nicaraguan President, was a Liberal. His coming into power marked the end of Liberal rule nonetheless, since the revolution he led was a Conservative movement.

<sup>462</sup> Harold N. Denny, *Dollars for Bullets: The Story of American Rule in Nicaragua* (New York: Dial Press, 1929), 90.

<sup>463</sup> Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power*, 145.

<sup>464</sup> Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 161.

<sup>465</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 205-206.

The 1912 civil war between the Diaz government and the Liberal rebellion supported by Luis Mena prompted the United States to intervene once again, marking the third and final episode of US President William H. Taft's regime change operation in Nicaragua. Contrary to the 1910 US intervention, which was limited to the landing of US marines declaring neutral zones in battle areas, the third US intervention in 1912 saw American troops engage in actual battles with revolutionary forces. The official authorization of the intervention came on August 5 by US President Taft as a response to the request for troops by the American Minister to Nicaragua, George T. Weitzel.<sup>466</sup> The first one hundred marines landed at the Pacific port of Corinto already on August 4 and arrived in the Nicaraguan capital a day later. Another 350 marines arrived on August 14 and soon they were nearly 3,000 American forces on Nicaraguan soil.<sup>467</sup> Their mission was to quell the uprising and prevent the Diaz government from being overthrown by the rebels. In the words of Dana Munro, "American forces had actually gone into battle to help suppress a revolution".<sup>468</sup> Opposition to Luis Mena and his Liberal allies was so strong that the United States gave up all semblance of neutrality vis-à-vis the warring factions and explicitly sided with Adolfo Diaz. The "authorized declaration of the policy of the United States", which outlined the United States' attitude towards the Nicaraguan civil war of 1912, pledged to lend the United States' "strong moral support to the cause of legally constituted good government", hence to incumbent President Diaz.<sup>469</sup> At the same time, the declaration expressed its condemnation of the Liberal uprising by likening Mena to Zelaya, assigning to the revolt "attributes of the abhorrent and intolerable Zelaya regime" and calling the revolt "in origin the most inexcusable in the annals of Central America".<sup>470</sup>

The 1912 US intervention in Nicaragua succeeded in defeating the Liberal uprising, keeping President Diaz in power and consolidating his rule. After roughly two months of fighting, Luis Mena capitulated in late September, allowing the US to take the city of Granada. The war went on, however, for Benjamin Zeledon, a Liberal general of the revolutionary forces, refused to surrender. In a message to Admiral Sunderland in September 1912, Zeledon protested the violation of Nicaraguan sovereignty, accusing the US of having established "foreign despotism" in Nicaragua.<sup>471</sup> His resistance, however, did not last long:

---

<sup>466</sup> The Secretary of State to the President, August 5, 1912. *PRFRUS 1912*, 1032-1033.

<sup>467</sup> Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 162.

<sup>468</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 215.

<sup>469</sup> The Acting Secretary of State to the American Minister, September 4, 1912. *PRFRUS 1912*, 1043.

<sup>470</sup> *Ibid.*, 1044.

<sup>471</sup> Benjamin Zeledon, September 19, 1912, quoted in Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 163.

Zeledon was killed on October 4 in one of the last battles of the war that pitted 850 marines against 800 rebels led by the Liberal general.<sup>472</sup> By October 8, 1912, the war ended with a decisive victory of the United States, which immediately started to disband the rebels' forces. In the aftermath of the conflict, all but 100 marines were withdrawn from Nicaragua and President Diaz won the presidential election of November 1912, which was boycotted by the Liberals.<sup>473</sup>

## **Emotional Frustration and Regime Change**

### *Taft's Hegemonic Expectations Towards Nicaragua*

Among the countries in its region, Nicaragua occupied an elevated position in the minds of US leaders at the time of Taft's presidency and before. Ever since the idea of an US-owned inter-oceanic canal connecting the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean emerged in the nineteenth century, possibly to be built across Nicaragua where, according to an 1876 US Senate commission report, the envisioned canal route possessed "greater advantages, and fewer difficulties [...] than any one of the other routes shown to be practicable",<sup>474</sup> this Central American country had figured prominently in American designs for the region and thus drew much attention from the political establishment in the US. Even after Theodore Roosevelt had decided to support Panama's separation from Colombia, formally recognizing the newly established Republic of Panama in November 1903 in what has been called "as brazen [...] an example of gunboat diplomacy as the world has ever seen",<sup>475</sup> and in 1904 ordered the construction of the long-desired isthmus canal across the formerly Colombian province, Nicaragua remained in the spotlight of US dealings with Central America, for, as Elihu Root, Roosevelt's Secretary of State, put it, "[t]he inevitable effect of our [the US'] building the [Panama] Canal must be to require us to police the surrounding premises".<sup>476</sup>

Regarding the United States' position and role in hemispheric affairs, William H. Taft, who was elected US President in November 1908 and started his four-year term in March 1909, based his worldview on the same assumptions as Theodore Roosevelt, his predecessor.

---

<sup>472</sup> Musicant, *The Banana Wars: A History of United States Military Intervention in Latin America from the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama*, 152-153.

<sup>473</sup> Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power*, 148.

<sup>474</sup> *U.S. Interest in an Interoceanic Canal 1835-1881*, ([cited August 9, 2014]; available from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/panama-canal-us.htm>. See also Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 109.

<sup>475</sup> Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power*, 134. For the separation of Panama from Colombia and the history of the Panama Canal construction, see David McCullough, *The Path Between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870-1914* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1977).

<sup>476</sup> Root to Flagler, January 3, 1905. *Elihu Root Papers, Letterbooks, 1899-1909*, Box 185, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

According to this outlook, the United States occupied a superior position vis-à-vis all other states in the region. The distribution of international obligations coming with the right to state sovereignty and recognition had therefore to be unequal across states, commensurate with the unequal roles the United States and other states played in hemispheric relations. Paired with what has been called the "Social Darwinian bigotry of the day",<sup>477</sup> the view that different races of human beings could be identified and ranked, and only people of European descent were capable of mastering and channeling their "lower passions",<sup>478</sup> Taft's hierarchical view of state obligations determined his expectations towards countries in the region in general and towards Nicaragua in particular. Specifying these expectations, Taft established in his first annual message to Congress in 1909 that US relations to states in the Western hemisphere and "international credit, in diplomacy as well as in finance", depended on whether governments in the region were in terms of administration and diplomacy "faithful to the principles of moderation, equity and justice".<sup>479</sup> With regard to Nicaragua, his Secretary of State Philander Knox seconded Taft's view, expressing his wish that "conditions of good government, progress, and prosperity" would be established and maintained in Nicaragua.<sup>480</sup> It was such statements and their resemblance to Roosevelt's repeated insistence on the observance of peace, stability, and order in the hemisphere,<sup>481</sup> that allowed Taft to assert that "[t]he Pan-American policy of this [Taft's] Government has long been fixed in its principles and remains unchanged".<sup>482</sup>

As much as Taft and Roosevelt's expectations towards states in the Western hemisphere exhibited a striking resemblance and despite Taft's public attempt at portraying his foreign policy as a seamless continuation of Roosevelt's, Taft, making his general outlook towards the region more hegemonic than Roosevelt's, added another dimension to

---

<sup>477</sup> Harrison, "The United States and the 1909 Nicaragua Revolution," 49.

<sup>478</sup> Hannigan, *The New World Power: American Foreign Policy, 1898-1917*, 7. In a 1905 speech discussing the differences between civil and common law in the administration of crime, Taft revealingly argued that people such as Porto Ricans or Filipinos lacked the "sense of justice which is implanted naturally in the Anglo-Saxon breast", making them "likely to prove unworthy jurors and to be affected in all their verdicts by their emotions and by every other motive than that which should control them, to wit: the well-being of society". See William H. Taft, "The Administration of Criminal Law," *The Yale Law Journal* 15, no. 1 (1905): 7. For the view of Francis M. Huntington Wilson, assistant Secretary of State, on differences in "tastes, psychology, sense of values, standards, customs, and outlook on life" between "typical North Americans and the peoples who live between the Rio Grande and Cape Horn", see Huntington Wilson, *Memoirs of an Ex-Diplomat*, 170-171.

<sup>479</sup> William H. Taft, *First Annual Message, December 7* (1909 [cited August 8, 2014]; available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29550&st=&st1=>.

<sup>480</sup> Knox to the President of the Central American Court of Justice, May 3, 1910. *PRFRUS 1910*, 744. Knox repeated his desire in a letter to the American legation in Nicaragua in January 1911, affirming that the US wants "peace, justice, prosperity, and ordered liberty prevail in the [Nicaraguan] Republic." See Knox to the American Minister, January 20, 1911, *PRFRUS 1911*, 670.

<sup>481</sup> See for example Roosevelt, *Fourth Annual Message, December 4* ([cited]).

<sup>482</sup> Taft, *First Annual Message, December 7* ([cited]).

expectations towards states in the Western hemisphere. As he laid out in his inaugural message to Congress, this new dimension consisted of Taft's promise to vigorously support and protect American business interests abroad, assigning new responsibilities to both the United States and target states in the region:

[t]o-day, more than ever before, American capital is seeking investment in foreign countries, and American products are more and more generally seeking foreign markets. As a consequence, in all countries there are American citizens and American interests to be protected, by their [US] Government [...]. The resultant situation inevitably imposes upon this Government vastly increased responsibilities. This Administration [...] is lending all proper support to legitimate and beneficial American enterprises in foreign countries.<sup>483</sup>

Taft's more expansive notion of expectations and state responsibilities not only brought the US government closer to US business interests,<sup>484</sup> it also sowed the seeds of conflict between the US and states in the region, as it imposed upon target states the duty to guarantee to US business free access to their domestic markets. A report by the newly created Bureau of Latin American Affairs in the US State Department explicated the rationale behind Taft's statement two months before Taft sent his message to Congress, reinforcing the President's express wish to have free access to foreign markets:

to avoid the perils of over-production and congestion, we must find foreign markets for our surplus products. The time is coming when the foreign market will be more important to our [the US'] prosperity than at present [...].<sup>485</sup>

In a speech on May 2, 1910, Taft himself asserted that it was of

utmost importance that while our [the US'] foreign policy should not be turned a hair's breadth from the straight path of justice, it may well be made to include active intervention to secure for our merchandise and our capitalists opportunity for profitable investment which shall inure to the benefit of both countries concerned.<sup>486</sup>

Because of Taft's more hegemonic notion of expectations towards Central America, his assistant Secretary of State, Francis M. Huntington Wilson, wrote in his memoir that both the Roosevelt government and the Taft were willing to "respect every American republic" as long as it acted in accordance with their expectations — "if it would be respected, a government

---

<sup>483</sup> Ibid.

<sup>484</sup> For an affirming view that Taft was closer to US business interests, see Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 142-143, Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, 64.

<sup>485</sup> "Latin America", Bureau of Latin American Affairs", October 6, 1909. *Philander C. Knox Papers, Bound General Correspondence, 1796-1922*, Box 9, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>486</sup> "The President's Speech at the Americus Club", May 2, 1910. *Philander C. Knox Papers, Bound General Correspondence, 1796-1922*, Box 10, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

must act respectably" — but confirmed that a "much stricter application of this reasonable criterion characterized the Latin-American policy of the Taft Administration".<sup>487</sup>

### *Nicaraguan Obstruction*

When Taft took office in March 1909, Nicaragua was under the rule of Jose Santos Zelaya, member of the Liberal Party who, terminating 36 years of Conservative rule in Nicaragua, had come to power through an uprising in 1893 known as the July Revolution.<sup>488</sup> Despite Zelaya's hard grip on power and his authoritarian methods of governance, US-Nicaragua relations were initially "fairly cordial for most of the Zelaya dictatorship".<sup>489</sup> At least in two cases, US support for Zelaya was so great that the US leadership decided to assist the Nicaraguan dictator even militarily: first, when President Zelaya tried to extend his rule over the eastern part of Nicaragua, the US landed marines and helped drive out the British military, effectively putting an end to the Misquito protectorate and paving the way for the unification of Nicaragua, which was achieved in November 1894.<sup>490</sup> Then, two years later in 1896 amidst a rebellion against Zelaya, US ships cut off arms supplies to the anti-Zelaya insurgents by blocking one Nicaragua port, "which quickly ended the rebellion" and helped Zelaya stay in power.<sup>491</sup>

While bilateral relations between the two states were generally good in the first years of Zelaya's rule, they had already begun to deteriorate when US President Taft came into power. The main obstruction to US expectations was the growingly intransigent foreign policy of the Nicaraguan President. Rather than conforming to US desires of order and US control in the Western hemisphere, as succinctly as self-congratulatory summed up by

---

<sup>487</sup> Huntington Wilson, *Memoirs of an Ex-Diplomat*, 208.

<sup>488</sup> Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 126. See also John A. Booth, *The End And The Beginning: The Nicaraguan Revolution*, 2nd ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985), 22.

<sup>489</sup> Yann Kerevel, "Re-Examining the Politics of US Intervention in Early 20th Century Nicaragua: José Madriz and the Conservative Restoration," in *Research Paper Series No. 43* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico 2006), 9. For evidence that the Liberal Party repeatedly rigged elections, that Zelaya ran for the presidential office as the only candidate, and that, in the most bizarre case of fraudulent elections during Zelaya's presidency, his own three names, Jose, Santos, and Zelaya, appeared as names of three candidates on ballot lists for the 1905 presidential elections, see Benjamin I. Teplitz, "The Political and Economic Foundations of Modernization in Nicaragua: The Administration of Jose Santos Zelaya, 1893-1909" (Ph.D., Howard University, 1973), 61-64. As another account affirms, Zelaya ruled "Nicaragua with a cruel and iron hand", see Jessup, *Elihu Root: 1845-1909*, Vol. 1, 493.

<sup>490</sup> Brian Loveman, *No Higher Law: American Foreign Policy and the Western Hemisphere since 1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 155-156. US involvement was welcomed by Nicaragua, which regarded the US as "liberators expelling the British", see Benjamin T. Harrison, "Theodore Roosevelt and Nicaragua," *Business History Studies* 2 (1995): 46.

<sup>491</sup> Kerevel, "Re-Examining the Politics of US Intervention in Early 20th Century Nicaragua: José Madriz and the Conservative Restoration," 9. See also Marco A. Cardenal Tellería, *Nicaragua y su Historia: Cronología del Acontecer Histórico y Construcción de la Nación Nicaragüense, Vol. I: 1502-1936* (Managua: Banco Mercantil, 2000), 430.

Philander C. Knox, Taft's Secretary of State, in a private letter to the American President as "a measure of benevolent supervision over Latin American countries",<sup>492</sup> Zelaya's foreign policy exhibited defiance and aimed for autonomous decision-making, effectively undermining both Roosevelt and Taft's preference for unequal state responsibilities in the region. Being "conspicuously offensive to the American government",<sup>493</sup> Zelaya proved to be especially obstructive to American designs for the region when he first refused to be represented at a regional peace conference in September 1906 on the ground that "he did not wish to recognize the right of the United States to interfere in Central American affairs",<sup>494</sup> and then when he, more strikingly, invaded neighboring Honduras in early 1907 to support a domestic revolt there.<sup>495</sup> These two acts alarmed the Roosevelt government, as they collided with American efforts to foreclose interstate wars in Central America to stabilize the "surrounding premises" of the Panama Canal, as Roosevelt's Secretary of State Elihu Root demanded.<sup>496</sup>

After the change in US presidency from Roosevelt to Taft, Zelaya remained unabatedly obstructive to US expectations towards Nicaragua and Central America more broadly. According to Dana Munro, "[Philander] Knox and [Francis Huntington] Wilson blamed the Nicaraguan dictator for most of the trouble that had occurred in Central America since 1907",<sup>497</sup> convinced that Zelaya's government was "the principal obstacle to the establishment of peace in the Isthmus".<sup>498</sup> Knox' State Department declared in April 1909 that Zelaya's foreign policy was "in open defiance of international comity and conventional obligations".<sup>499</sup> As offensive Zelaya's foreign policy was, however, it was far from being the only bone of contention between him and the Taft government. Coupled with his continuously offensive foreign policy, it was Zelaya's domestic economic policies, lying at odds with Taft's expectation of free business access to foreign markets, that added fuel to the fire. Constituting an additional obstruction to the preferred foreign policy approach of the

---

<sup>492</sup> Knox to Taft, March 14, 1911. *William H. Taft Papers, Series 6: Executive Office Correspondence, 1909-1913*, reel 359, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>493</sup> Dana G. Munro, "Dollar Diplomacy in Nicaragua, 1909-1913," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 38, no. 2 (1958): 211.

<sup>494</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 147.

<sup>495</sup> Healy, *Drive to Hegemony: The United States in the Caribbean, 1898-1917*, 141, Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 52-53.

<sup>496</sup> Root to Flagler, January 3, 1905. *Elihu Root Papers, Letterbooks, 1899-1909*, Box 185, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>497</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 167.

<sup>498</sup> Dana G. Munro, *The Five Republics of Central America: Their Political and Economic Development and Their Relations with the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1918), 228.

<sup>499</sup> US State Department memo quoted in Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 167.

new US government, Zelaya granted monopolies to select firms and thereby hampered competition for concessions. Indeed, disputes over Zelaya's treatment of US business between the Nicaraguan and the US government arose primarily over concessions bought by American businessmen for Nicaragua's natural resources. A case in point was the controversy surrounding Zelaya's decision to cancel an American businessman's concession to cut lumber, which prompted the concerned lumber merchant, George D. Emery, to turn to Washington, demanding compensation for incurred losses.<sup>500</sup> With a 1909 State Department report calling the cancellation from August 1906 "an arbitrary and unwarranted act of Zelaya",<sup>501</sup> Knox backed the Emery claim, telling the Nicaraguan representative on March 10, 1909, just four days after he had taken office as Secretary of State, that further delay in reaching a settlement would be "unnecessary, unwarranted, and dilatory".<sup>502</sup> Although Emery's case was eventually settled in September 1909,<sup>503</sup> obstruction persisted, as Zelaya continued to grant monopolies to favorites and, according to Huntington Wilson, the American assistant Secretary of State, robbed his "countrymen by graft to the extent of making himself a multi-millionaire".<sup>504</sup>

Another of Zelaya's domestic economic policies obstructed Taft's expectations towards Nicaragua. In addition to his policy of granting concessions to his favorites, Zelaya was, in the eyes of the US government, also guilty of a decrease of American exports to Nicaragua. While Philander Knox' famous Knox Note from December 1909 did not dwell on Zelaya's obstructive economic policies, an internal State Department report revealed the true extent of what bothered the US government, chastising Zelaya for the imposition of duties on American products "to such extortionate figures as to make their importation practically prohibitive", calling the Nicaraguan President "the arch enemy of American trade extension", and finally concluding that "the annual exports from the United States to Nicaragua have decreased to an appalling extent".<sup>505</sup>

---

<sup>500</sup> Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, 63.

<sup>501</sup> State Department report 1909. *Philander C. Knox Papers, Bound General Correspondence, 1796-1922*, Box 9, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>502</sup> Knox to Espinosa, March 10, 1909 quoted in Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 169.

<sup>503</sup> "Claim of the George D. Emery Co.", *PRFRUS* 1909, 460-467. See also Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 145, Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, 65.

<sup>504</sup> Huntington Wilson quoted in Musicant, *The Banana Wars: A History of United States Military Intervention in Latin America from the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama*, 137. See also Teplitz, "The Political and Economic Foundations of Modernization in Nicaragua: The Administration of Jose Santos Zelaya, 1893-1909", 234.

<sup>505</sup> "An Indictment of Jose Santos Zelaya of Nicaragua", *Philander C. Knox Papers, Unbound General Correspondence, 1872-1921*, Box 28, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.



### *US Perception of Nicaraguan Obstruction*

I have so far shown that while the actions of the Nicaraguan leadership did not change across the administrations of Roosevelt and Taft, obstruction was more extensive during Taft's presidency, as US expectations became more hegemonic. US expectations changed, not Nicaraguan behavior. Examining how the two US governments perceived Zelaya's behavior in terms of foreign policy and domestic economic policy, the emotional ramifications of which will be discussed in the next section, this section argues that despite the absence of change in Zelaya's behavior across the two presidencies, there was a notable divergence in how the two US governments perceived Nicaraguan obstruction.

Based on the relatively larger set of expectations Taft had towards Nicaragua, he perceived more of Zelaya's actions as obstructive than his predecessor. Zelaya's domestic economic policies did not go unnoticed during Roosevelt's presidency, but judging the Nicaraguan President's actions in light of more limited expectations, the same Nicaraguan decisions regarding monopoly rights and concession grants that sounded alarm bells during Taft's presidency, were not obstructive in Roosevelt's eyes. The Emery claim is a case in point, lending itself to a cross-government comparison, as Zelaya's cancellation of Emery's concession occurred during Roosevelt's presidency and its settlement lingered over into Taft's term. As seen above, for the Taft government, the cancellation of the American businessman's concession in August 1906<sup>506</sup> and Zelaya's unwillingness to reach a quick settlement were highly obstructive in the eyes of William Taft and Philander Knox. Decisions taken after Taft's inauguration and internal State Department reports confirm how the Taft government, based on its larger set of expectations towards Nicaragua, immediately "took a more vigorous stand on the Emery claim",<sup>507</sup> giving it high priority in the context of US-Nicaragua relations. Because Zelaya's handling of the matter was obstructive to Taft's expectations, the "Taft administration barely took time to settle into office before it began pressuring Nicaragua on the Emery claim",<sup>508</sup> and what is more, initiated an anti-Zelaya media campaign to "turn public opinion against Zelaya".<sup>509</sup>

Compared to Taft's response to Zelaya's handling of the Emery case, his presidential predecessor had been almost negligent in his dealings with the case. As Nicaraguan domestic economic policy was neither a major concern nor part of Roosevelt's expectations towards

---

<sup>506</sup> State Department report 1909. *Philander C. Knox Papers, Bound General Correspondence, 1796-1922*, Box 9, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>507</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 169.

<sup>508</sup> Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 143.

<sup>509</sup> Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, 65-66.

Nicaraguan state conduct, Roosevelt "paid little attention to the complaints of businessmen like Emery".<sup>510</sup> Rather than according high importance to Emery's complaint about the cancellation of his concession, the matter "was handled as a routine matter by the lawyers in the State Department".<sup>511</sup> Roosevelt simply did not consider conflicts between American business groups in Nicaragua and the government of Nicaragua as a matter grave enough to risk embittering the bilateral relations between him and Zelaya. To be sure, relations between the two governments were not exactly friction-free. Zelaya's aggressive foreign policy and his military forays into neighboring countries were certainly obstructive to Roosevelt's expectations of peace and tranquility in Central America and his Secretary of State even believed that Zelaya was "bent on conquest and if driven from one pretext immediately finds another or goes on without any".<sup>512</sup> And yet, Roosevelt still referred to Zelaya as a "great and good friend"<sup>513</sup> and "may even have seen a reflection of himself" in the Nicaragua,<sup>514</sup> all this in spite of the same economic policies of the Nicaraguan government that were heavily obstructive to Roosevelt's presidential successor.

What is more, the obstructions themselves, irrespective of their different extent across the Roosevelt and Taft governments, were perceived differently. While Roosevelt and Root considered Zelaya's domestic economic policies as a routine matter, even if they clashed with American business interests in Nicaragua, and his obstructions in foreign policy as a necessary evil typical of interstate relations, Taft and Knox perceived Nicaraguan obstruction as illegitimate and directed at the US, convinced that the source of Zelaya's behavior was a deep-seated hatred for the United States. This negative perception shaped how the Taft government interpreted events in Nicaragua and Zelaya's actions, as is documented by the government's internal correspondence. When, amidst its fight against the Estrada rebellion, the Nicaraguan government captured and later executed two Americans who had joined the insurgents in their fight against Zelaya, the US consulate in Managua cabled to Philander Knox that the Nicaraguan President "hastened to do it [the execution] [...] not so much because they were revolutionists, but because they were Americans",<sup>515</sup> discounting the fact

---

<sup>510</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>511</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 168.

<sup>512</sup> Root to Adey, July 1, 1907, see Jessup, *Elihu Root: 1845-1909*, Vol. 1, 505.

<sup>513</sup> Roosevelt to Zelaya, June 10, 1908, quoted in Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 142.

<sup>514</sup> Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, 64. According to one account, similarities in conduct between Roosevelt and Zelaya were not far-fetched, as "some Nicaraguans had compared [Zelaya] to Roosevelt", see Thomas G. Paterson et al., *American Foreign Relations: A History to 1920*, Vol. 1, 7th ed. (Boston: Wadsworth, 2009), 247.

<sup>515</sup> Vince Consul Caldera to the Secretary of State, November 20, 1909. *PRFRUS* 1909, 449.

that the rebellion posed a serious threat to the survival of the Nicaraguan regime and that Zelaya had little interest in antagonizing the US, drawing it into the conflict, and providing a pretext for intervention, as Zelaya himself explained in his resignation speech.<sup>516</sup> Zelaya's actions were thus perceived as having "become too outrageous" to warrant US recognition.<sup>517</sup> In terms of foreign policy, a State Department report noted that, rather than being a response to the hostile disposition of Nicaragua's neighbors towards Zelaya,<sup>518</sup> his military cross-border actions and forays into foreign territories were "deliberate and insolent".<sup>519</sup> That the US government perceived Zelaya's obstructions as malicious actions directed at the US is reflected by the belief that Zelaya's attitude "toward the Government of the United States and American citizens is uniformly malevolent and vindictive", "of a special hostility to this country [the US]", and that the Nicaraguan President was moved by "intense hatred [...] of everything American".<sup>520</sup>

#### *Taft's Emotional Frustration*

Tracing Zelaya's actions back to an allegedly deep-seated anti-Americanism on the part of the Nicaraguan President, Taft and Knox' negative perception of Zelaya's obstructions of their expectations towards Nicaragua led to considerable frustration. After months of diplomatic pressure and Zelaya's continued intransigence both in foreign policy and domestic economic policies, Taft decided in November 1909 that Zelaya had to go. Knox' unusually blunt message to the Nicaraguan Chargé, the famous Knox Note, made clear that there was nothing Zelaya could do to stay in power.<sup>521</sup> For too long had he menaced Taft, who, making no efforts to hide his sentiments about the lack of peace in Central America and continuous obstructions, wrote to Enrique Creel, Mexican ambassador to the US and trusted friend, about his desire to "knock their heads [Latin Americans] together until they should maintain peace".<sup>522</sup> Convinced that there was "no hope of improvement through friendly pressure" and

---

<sup>516</sup> In that speech, Zelaya expressed his hope that, after his resignation, there would be a "suspension of the hostility manifested by the American Government to whom I [Zelaya] do not desire to be a pretext, that it may continue intervening in any way in the destiny of the country [Nicaragua]". See "Manifesto of President Zelaya to the National Assembly", December 17, 1909, *PRFRUS* 1909, 459.

<sup>517</sup> The Secretary of State to Senator Cullom, June 14, 1910. *Philander C. Knox Papers, State Department File 1909-1913*, Box 39, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>518</sup> Prior to Zelaya's 1907 invasion of Honduras, for example, "Honduran troops reportedly attacked Nicaraguan border posts", see Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 138.

<sup>519</sup> "An Indictment of Jose Santos Zelaya of Nicaragua", *Philander C. Knox Papers, Unbound General Correspondence, 1872-1921*, Box 28, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>520</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>521</sup> The Secretary of State to the Nicaraguan Chargé, December 1, 1909. *PRFRUS* 1909, 455.

<sup>522</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation with Enrique Creel, December 21, 1909, quoted in Lars Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U. S. Policy Toward Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), 206.

that "the only pressure known to this [the Nicaraguan] Government [was] force",<sup>523</sup> Taft's frustration with Zelaya made regime change an attractive foreign policy alternative to terminate the Nicaraguan President's rule and his perceivedly unrelenting anti-Americanism.

As shown above, Zelaya resigned from the presidency merely two weeks after the Knox Note and decided to leave the country. Up until then, the Taft government had supported the Estrada rebellion, but had not used direct force to unseat the obstructive President. When Jose Madriz succeeded Zelaya as Nicaraguan President, Taft could have recognized the new government and terminated his interference with Nicaragua's authority structure. Yet, his frustration with Zelaya and his government was so profound that he did not consider taking this step and instead, and against all odds and the advice of both the Mexican and British government,<sup>524</sup> broadened his support for the insurgents until Madriz was defeated as well. To the minds of Taft and Knox, Madriz was indeed a Zelayista, someone who would continue Zelaya's obstructive policies.<sup>525</sup>

The decision to treat Madriz just like Zelaya must seem puzzling if we disregard the effects of the US President's emotional frustration. First, despite being Zelaya's former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Madriz was not Zelaya's first choice, as some suggest.<sup>526</sup> After several other names that were unacceptable to the US had been discarded, Madriz was a compromise solution that Nicaraguans thought would receive Taft's endorsement, given that he was "the Nicaraguan delegate for the Central American Court of Justice"<sup>527</sup> known for his opposition to Zelaya.<sup>528</sup> Second, The practice of regime change in Nicaragua did not aim at installing a particular regime to the United States' liking. In terms of preferences for one of the two dominating parties in the Nicaraguan political system, the Conservatives and the Liberals, the US was surprisingly indifferent to the identity of the ruling faction. When the United States asked a former US Minister to Nicaragua, William L. Merry, to name potential candidates for Zelaya's replacement in December 1909, Merry was explicitly instructed to

---

<sup>523</sup> "An Indictment of Jose Santos Zelaya of Nicaragua", *Philander C. Knox Papers, Unbound General Correspondence, 1872-1921*, Box 28, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>524</sup> Richard V. Salisbury, "Great Britain, the United States, and the 1909-1910 Nicaraguan Crisis," *The Americas* (1997): 386-387.

<sup>525</sup> "Memorandum Regarding the Eligibility of Doctor Jose Madriz to be Provisional President of Nicaragua", December 20, 1909, *Philander C. Knox Papers, Unbound General Correspondence, 1872-1921*, Box 28, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. See also Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 60.

<sup>526</sup> See for example James Mahoney, *The Legacies of Liberalism: Path Dependence and Political Regimes in Central America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 189.

<sup>527</sup> Kerevel, "Re-Examining the Politics of US Intervention in Early 20th Century Nicaragua: José Madriz and the Conservative Restoration," 16.

<sup>528</sup> John E. Findling, "The United States and Zelaya: A Study in the Diplomacy of Expediency" (Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin, 1971), 63-65.

disregard the Nicaraguan partisan divide. While the central criterion for potential candidates was strong opposition to President Zelaya, party membership was at best a secondary issue.<sup>529</sup> Third, once in office, Madriz immediately tried to prove his willingness to find a negotiated settlement and terminate the civil war, even proposing "a committee of honorable persons to discuss an amicable and equitable settlement of the present strife with the revolutionary leaders".<sup>530</sup> Furthermore, in January 1910, Madriz "took action to punish those responsible for executing Cannon and Groce",<sup>531</sup> the two Americans who had fought for Estrada and were caught by Zelaya's forces. Fourth, the argument that the Taft government was hostile towards Madriz because of strategic reasons, particularly the fear that Madriz would not consent to US financial oversight regarding Nicaraguan customs and debts, is unfounded. While the Liberal party in Nicaragua, to which Madriz belonged, was generally more apprehensive of US encroachment in Nicaragua, Madriz was far from being a principled guardian of Nicaraguan sovereignty. Just as he offered "to Great Britain the controversial canal rights" in June 1910 shortly before he resigned,<sup>532</sup> it is not entirely unimaginable that he would have accepted the creation of an American customs collectorship if the US had let him stay in power. As a consequence, with Madriz not being Zelaya's hand-picked successor, trying to reach a negotiated settlement under US supervision, his apparent willingness to negotiate sovereign rights away to great powers, and the Taft government's indifference with respect to the two Nicaraguan parties, we cannot understand Taft's fundamental opposition towards the Nicaraguan President if we do not take the US President's intense frustration into account.

### **Alternative Explanations for Regime Change in Nicaragua**

While diplomatic history literature and most of IR literature do not conceive of the series of US interventions in Nicaragua between 1909 and 1912 as an instance of regime change,<sup>533</sup> the sources and motivations of Taft's decision to intervene in Nicaraguan domestic affairs have been broadly discussed. Grouping together these different explanations based on general outlooks on how the United States viewed its regional neighbors, one can discern three

---

<sup>529</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 179.

<sup>530</sup> Consul Moffat to the Secretary of State, December 27, 1909. *PRFRUS 1910*, 738.

<sup>531</sup> Kerevel, "Re-Examining the Politics of US Intervention in Early 20th Century Nicaragua: José Madriz and the Conservative Restoration," 17.

<sup>532</sup> Salisbury, "Great Britain, the United States, and the 1909-1910 Nicaraguan Crisis," 392.

<sup>533</sup> For an exception in IR literature that treats the ousting of Jose Madriz in 1910 as an instance of institutional foreign-imposed regime change, see Downes and Montén, "Forced to Be Free?: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization," 123.

different arguments inspired by defensive realism, an argument about US economic interests, and offensive realism.

The argument that is most prominent in the literature and most closely aligned with the official justifications of the Taft government is based on the logic of defensive realism, asserting that US regime change in Nicaragua was predicated upon the US leadership's perception of Zelaya's activities, both domestic and international, as a threat to US interests and security.<sup>534</sup> According to Dana Munro, the strongest advocate of this view, "Taft and Knox believed that the United States must promote stable government and economic progress as the best means of warding off European interference".<sup>535</sup> European interference was thought to be a likely scenario because Nicaragua was the most significant Central American state, "possessing an excellent canal route and bordered by islands which may serve as naval bases".<sup>536</sup> Consequently, "American interests would be seriously menaced should a non-American power secure canal concessions in Nicaragua", with weak Central American republics keeping "alive the fear of non-American aggression" in the minds of US foreign policymakers.<sup>537</sup> While domestic instability was, following the logic of the argument, a possible invitation for European powers to extend their influence in Central America and regain lost ground in the Western hemisphere, a more direct threat to US security was Zelaya's aggressive foreign policy and his "ambition to unite Central America under his own leadership".<sup>538</sup> After all, in the first decade of the twentieth century, Nicaragua was, according to one historian, a "regional power to be reckoned with".<sup>539</sup>

A careful assessment of the empirical evidence confounds the view that US regime change in Nicaragua was predicated upon the US leadership's perception of Zelaya as a national security threat to the United States. Although the prevention of "foreign entanglements"<sup>540</sup> in Nicaragua was cited by assistant Secretary of State Huntington Wilson as a prime reason for US involvement in the country, it is unlikely that the Taft government felt threatened by Zelaya's activities, whether directly or indirectly. As obstructive as his

---

<sup>534</sup> Munro, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921*, 160-216.

<sup>535</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

<sup>536</sup> Anna I. Powell, "Relations between the United States and Nicaragua, 1898-1916," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 8, no. 1 (1928): 44. See also Benjamin R. Beede, *The Small Wars of the United States, 1899-2009: An Annotated Bibliography*, revised 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2010), 112.

<sup>537</sup> Powell, "Relations between the United States and Nicaragua, 1898-1916," 43-44.

<sup>538</sup> Munro, "Dollar Diplomacy in Nicaragua, 1909-1913," 210. See also Musicant, *The Banana Wars: A History of United States Military Intervention in Latin America from the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama*, 138.

<sup>539</sup> Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 139.

<sup>540</sup> Francis M. Huntington Wilson, "The Relation of Government to Foreign Investment," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 68, no. Nov. (1916): 306.

forays into military adventures were, given the immense discrepancy between Nicaraguan and US military capabilities, both Zelaya and the US leadership knew that Zelaya's aggressive foreign policy was hardly elevating Nicaragua to a position of counterweight to US influence in the region. Nowhere became this more evident than in Zelaya's invasion of Honduras in March 1907. At the height of Nicaragua's military campaign against the combined forces of Honduras and El Salvador,<sup>541</sup> the US government decided to simply forbid the shelling of Honduran towns at the Atlantic coast. In a letter to the secretary of the navy, Elihu Root established, almost like a neutral arbiter to the conflict, that such action was not "permitted".<sup>542</sup> As Jessup shows, this striking high-handedness, which was testament to the superiority of the US vis-à-vis Nicaragua, was "not what it would have been during a war between European countries",<sup>543</sup> and while the Nicaraguans "resented the fact that the United States was 'mediating' with battleships", such action was "so usual [...] that the United States naval officers in charge were able in almost every case to act in perfect harmony with the commanders of the local troops".<sup>544</sup>

Regarding the argument that Nicaragua was not a direct, but surely an indirect threat to the US through the possibility of European interference, confirming evidence is similarly elusive. First, the Taft administration did not seem to be fearful of European involvement. In fact, Taft's confidence in US regional superiority was so strong that he questioned the underlying logic of the Monroe Doctrine, which had shaped the fundamentals of US foreign policy in the Americas for nearly a century, in his first annual message to Congress, proclaiming that "the apprehension which gave rise to the Monroe Doctrine may be said to have nearly disappeared".<sup>545</sup> This growing confidence was reflected by the British withdrawal from Central America and the Caribbean which left American influence in the region unchecked by any of the other dominant world powers of the time. While the second half of the nineteenth century was marked by Anglo-American competition in Central America, the balance continuously tilted towards the United States, exemplified by the succession of bilateral treaties regarding isthmian canal rights from the 1850 Clayton-Bulwer Treaty to the

---

<sup>541</sup> Standing out from Nicaragua's invasion, the infamous battle of Namasigüe involved the first-time use of machine guns in Central America, inflicting "such heavy casualties that it earned the ghastly distinction as the bloodiest in history in terms of losses for the length of battle time". See Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 53.

<sup>542</sup> Root to the secretary of the navy, April 1, 1907, quoted in Jessup, *Elihu Root: 1845-1909, Vol. 1*, 504.

<sup>543</sup> Ibid.

<sup>544</sup> Ibid., 504-505. See also Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 53.

<sup>545</sup> Taft, *First Annual Message, December 7* ([cited]). Lars Schoultz argues that "[u]nlike Roosevelt [...], Taft's Caribbean policy was not motivated primarily by the fear of European meddling", see Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U. S. Policy Toward Latin America*, 205.

1901 Hay-Pauncefote Treaty,<sup>546</sup> to the point that "by the 1900s American hegemony in the circum-Caribbean region was a rapidly developing fact of international life".<sup>547</sup> What is more, the United Kingdom was not only retreating from the region, it also had no intention to regain lost influence to challenge the United States. As Walter Scholes shows, "Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Minister, made it perfectly clear to Lord Bryce [British ambassador to the US] that England would make no political move in this area [the Caribbean] so long as the United States kept an open-door policy".<sup>548</sup> Second, according to the logic of the argument about the central role of US apprehension towards potential European interference, President Taft should have put a premium on domestic stability in Nicaragua. What the administration did instead, however, was to actively foment revolution, providing support to the Estrada rebellion against both Zelaya and Madriz rather than propping them up against the armed insurgents. Ironically, the effect of US support for the Estrada rebels made European involvement more likely: desperately trying to subdue the rebellion led by Estrada, Madriz, Zelaya's successor as head of state in Nicaragua, approached the UK government "with a request for their good offices in mediating between himself and the Government of the United States".<sup>549</sup> While the UK, apprehensive of the ramifications for its relations to the US, eventually turned down the mediation offer, one British foreign office clerk astutely noted that rather than bringing about stability in Nicaragua, the US government copied "the methods of the Central American governments in encouraging revolutions against their political opponents".<sup>550</sup>

Against the backdrop of dollar diplomacy as the guiding principle of Taft's foreign policy towards the Caribbean and Central America, another argument has it that the US intervention in Nicaragua was due to the influence of US business interests on US foreign policy. Questioning Huntington Wilson's statement that "Government was using Wall Street

---

<sup>546</sup> The 1850 Clayton-Bulwer Treaty stipulated that neither the US nor the UK would build an isthmian canal on their own in Central America. This treaty was superseded by the Hay-Pauncefote Treaty of 1901 which granted the US the exclusive right to build the canal without British involvement. See Hannigan, *The New World Power: American Foreign Policy, 1898-1917*, 25-27.

<sup>547</sup> Salisbury, "Great Britain, the United States, and the 1909-1910 Nicaraguan Crisis," 380-381.

<sup>548</sup> Walter Scholes, "Philander C. Knox," in *An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Norman A. Graebner (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), 62.

<sup>549</sup> James Bryce to Secretary of State, June 24, 1910. *Philander C. Knox Papers, State Department File 1909-1913*, Box 39, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

<sup>550</sup> Rowland Sperling, April 16, 1910, quoted in Salisbury, "Great Britain, the United States, and the 1909-1910 Nicaraguan Crisis," 390. Benjamin Harrison correctly notes that "[t]hose scholars who have argued the primary motive for U.S. policy in Nicaragua was stability for the canal area are hard pressed to explain why Washington supported revolution in Central America", see Harrison, "The United States and the 1909 Nicaragua Revolution," 59. For another view that the Taft government was not interested in Nicaraguan stability, potentially trying to prevent European incursion, see Walter LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1993), 39.



to serve our [US] national interest",<sup>551</sup> the argument flips the relationship between the two, treating the US government as a tool in the hands of powerful American corporations not only domestically, but also concerning foreign affairs. In the case of the Taft administration, so the argument goes, big business was particularly successful to steer US foreign policy due to the business background of many foreign policy elites like Secretary of State Philander Knox who had represented major American companies as a corporate lawyer before joining the administration.<sup>552</sup> Based on the basic premise of business dominance in foreign affairs, US corporations pushed for regime change in Nicaragua, according to this view, because Zelaya "continually clashed with American companies operating in his country".<sup>553</sup>

US business groups played an important role in the 1909 uprising against Zelaya, as they supported Estrada and the insurgents financially.<sup>554</sup> Moreover, as argued previously, Taft and Knox were more attentive to US business interests and their access to foreign markets than the Roosevelt government. The influence on US foreign policymaking of US corporations with a vested interest in receiving protection from the US government, however, should not be exaggerated. Dollar diplomacy indeed served to bring together, on the one hand, US interests in peaceful and stable state conduct in Central America, and on the other hand, the interests of American business, but the impulse came from the Taft government, not from the economic sector. According to Scholes, "the [US] bankers seldom forced their plans on the [State] Department". Rather, "the Department had to work very hard to get bankers to interest themselves in the political and economic affairs of Latin America".<sup>555</sup> US business groups did not benefit extensively from the scheme, for the State Department "made a special effort to make sure that the contracts were not unfair or injurious to Nicaragua".<sup>556</sup> Munro argues that business conditions were so volatile due to political instability in Nicaragua that the "fascination of cooperating with the American government in a constructive enterprise in a strange country outweighed sound business judgment in leading bankers into it".<sup>557</sup>

A third argument emphasizes the US government's appetite for expansion and imperialism as the main driving force for US military intervention in Nicaragua. This argument claims that the US sought, first and foremost, control over Nicaragua, not peace in

---

<sup>551</sup> Huntington Wilson, *Memoirs of an Ex-Diplomat*, 216.

<sup>552</sup> Harrison, "The United States and the 1909 Nicaragua Revolution," 48.

<sup>553</sup> Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, 63.

<sup>554</sup> Nearing and Freeman, *Dollar Diplomacy: A Study in American Imperialism*, 152.

<sup>555</sup> Scholes, "Philander C. Knox," 63.

<sup>556</sup> Munro, "Dollar Diplomacy in Nicaragua, 1909-1913," 232.

<sup>557</sup> Ibid. See also Bermann, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848*, 150, George T. Weitzel, "The United States and Central America. Policy of Clay and Knox," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 132, no. Jul. (1927): 122.

the region. While some go so far as to argue that the United States' drive to dominance was inevitable, for "strategic geography dictates political events",<sup>558</sup> others start from the premise that US foreign policy elites sought control over Central America and the Caribbean because they were strongly influenced by naval ideas about the importance of controlling the sea. Thayer Mahan's sea power doctrine had, according to this argument, the biggest impact on how foreign policy elites thought about their place in the world, assigning a key role to controlling the region and relegating the importance of maintaining regional peace to a secondary consideration.<sup>559</sup> Recalcitrant regimes like Zelaya's Nicaragua were seen as a danger to US designs for the region, making intervention and the fomenting of revolution a viable and attractive foreign policy tool in order to bring leaders into power who would accept American hegemony.<sup>560</sup> The Taft government was quick to interject the US into the Nicaraguan struggle for power when the "opportunity for U.S. intervention arose in 1909".<sup>561</sup>

The appetite-for-expansion argument correctly gauges the Taft government's predisposition in terms of expectations towards Nicaragua. The self-assigned responsibility to oversee Nicaraguan affairs and guarantee peaceful international conduct as well as domestic economic policies that would allow US business to have access to Nicaraguan markets, fundamentally shaped Taft's foreign policy outlook on the Central American republic. To infer from these expectations that the US was eager to engage in regime change, however, overstates Taft's appetite for involvement in Nicaraguan affairs. The actual idea of dollar diplomacy was to make target states adhere to his pre-specified expectations without needing to resort to the use of armed force and military intervention. As his Secretary of State laid out in a foreign policy speech, the ultimate goal of the government's foreign policy was to provide for stability in Central America so as to "diminish our [US] responsibilities in proportion", arguing that the "most effective way to escape the logical consequences of the Monroe doctrine is the help them [Central American states] to help themselves".<sup>562</sup> That Taft

---

<sup>558</sup> Musicant, *The Banana Wars: A History of United States Military Intervention in Latin America from the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama*, 1.

<sup>559</sup> Hannigan, *The New World Power: American Foreign Policy, 1898-1917*, 19.

<sup>560</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>561</sup> LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, 47.

<sup>562</sup> "Address of the Honorable Philander C. Knox before the New York State Bar Association", January 19, 1912. *PRFRUS* 1912, 1088. See also Schoultz, *Beneath the United States: A History of U. S. Policy Toward Latin America*, 207.

eventually engaged in regime change was thus not testament to his untamable appetite for expansion, but rather to the failure of dollar diplomacy.<sup>563</sup>

## **Conclusion**

US regime change in Nicaragua was a consequence of Taft and Knox' emotional frustration with Zelaya's conduct, both domestic and international. Based on hegemonic expectations towards Nicaragua, the Taft government interpreted Zelaya's obstructions as an expression of deep hatred for the United States and concluded that only the overthrow of the Nicaraguan President and the elimination of Zelayist elements from the country's political authority structure would put an end to Nicaragua's obstructive conduct in terms of foreign policy aggression and domestic economic policies biased against US business. These sentiments ran so deep that even Jose Madriz could not escape being associated with Zelaya's regime, sealing his fate as a perceived American adversary and target of continued US regime change activity. Had Taft regarded Madriz' brief rule as legitimate and friendly to US interests, he might have extended diplomatic recognition to his regime and reached the goals of dollar diplomacy without substituting bullets for dollars.

---

<sup>563</sup> As Herring notes, the "ambitious efforts to implement dollar diplomacy in Central America produced few agreements, little stability, and numerous military interventions". See George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1776* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 373.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### The 1965 Dominican Intervention

The Cold War provided the United States with multiple opportunities for meddling, intervention, and regime change in foreign countries. In Latin America alone, an area which the United States had considered its backyard even before the global competition with the Soviet Union broke out during Harry Truman's presidency, upheavals and domestic turmoil in a number of states led to the overthrow of ten Latin American dictators between 1956 and 1960.<sup>564</sup> A "series of pro-democratic populist revolutions" invited US involvement,<sup>565</sup> drawing the country deep into the domestic affairs of its hemispheric neighbors. While American regime change efforts and interference with the governance structure of targeted states in the hemisphere comprised covert operations in Guatemala in 1954, the failed 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, and the overthrow of Chilean President Salvador Allende in 1973,<sup>566</sup> the 1965 intervention in the Dominican Republic was one of few overt US regime change operations during the Cold War, making it an extra-ordinary event in US foreign policy.

The Dominican intervention began on April 28, 1965 when US President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered four hundred US marines to the island in reaction to a political crisis in the Dominican Republic.<sup>567</sup> Four days earlier, on April 24, constitutionalists supporting the ousted Dominican President Juan Bosch had overthrown the incumbent military junta headed by Donald Reid Cabral, precipitating a standoff between constitutionalist and loyalist forces.<sup>568</sup> In order to prevent the constitutionalist forces from gaining the upper hand and bringing the democratically elected Juan Bosch back into power, Johnson successively

---

<sup>564</sup> Stephen G. Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 11. For a history of superpower interventions in Third World countries during the Cold War, see Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>565</sup> Jerome Slater, "Democracy versus Stability: The Recent Latin American Policy of the United States," *Yale Review* 55, no. 2 (1965): 169.

<sup>566</sup> Russell Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 3. For US interventions in support of right-wing dictatorships during the early Cold War, see especially David F. Schmitz, *Thank God They're On Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

<sup>567</sup> "400 Marines Land at Santo Domingo", *Washington Post*, April 29, 1965. "Statement by President Johnson", *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 52, No. 1351, May 17, 1965, 738-9. Note that according to Piero Gleijeses, 536 landed on Dominican soil. Piero Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), 256.

<sup>568</sup> "Dominican Rising Said to Collapse", *New York Times*, April 25, 1965. "Insurgents Seize Capital of Dominican Republic", *The Times*, April 27, 1965.

increased the number of American troops within ten days from the initial sending of marines to nearly 23,000 forces, "almost half as many as were then serving in Vietnam".<sup>569</sup> What was initially proclaimed to be a limited rescue operation became a full-scale invasion and seventeen-month-long military occupation, during which the Johnson administration negotiated a settlement between the two Dominican factions, established a provisional government, and paved the way for free elections in June 1966. Once the defeat of the constitutionalists was certain and final, the regime change operation came to a symbolic end when the former President Juan Bosch accepted his party's electoral defeat on June 13, angrily accusing the United States of having abused "its military power to impose its will on the Dominican Republic against all right and reason".<sup>570</sup>

Given that the 1965 Dominican intervention was the "first instance of American boots on the ground in the Caribbean since the 1930s"<sup>571</sup> and, in the words of Fred Halliday, "the largest ever military operation conducted by the USA against a Latin American country",<sup>572</sup> reminding many around the world of the era of gunboats and big sticks,<sup>573</sup> it begs the question of why the Johnson administration ordered it. This chapter contends that Johnson's emotional frustration with Juan Bosch led to the US President's fundamental opposition to the return of the Dominican ex-President to power. The administration believed that Bosch's obstructive stance towards the United States during and after his presidency was a product of an intense hatred for the United States the administration believed Bosch harbored. Rather than seeing Bosch's behavioral deviations from US expectations towards him with regard to the persecution of Dominican Communists and an implementation of economic policies in line with the Alliance for Progress as a phenomenon that could be traced back to domestic pressures Bosch had to deal with, the Johnson administration was convinced that his obstruction could be equated with an anti-American attitude. Causing high emotionality and frustration with Bosch, the decision to intervene can therefore only be understood if we take the impact of Johnson's emotional state on his decision-making into account.

The outline of the chapter is as follows. Section One provides an overview of the events in the Dominican Republic preceding overt US intervention. Section Two deals with

---

<sup>569</sup> Abraham F. Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972), 112.

<sup>570</sup> "Bosch Concedes, but Blames U.S. for Defeat", *Los Angeles Times*, June 14, 1966.

<sup>571</sup> Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama*, 22.

<sup>572</sup> Fred Halliday, *Caamaño in London: The Exile of a Latin American Revolutionary* (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas, University of London, School of Advanced Study, 2010), 2.

<sup>573</sup> See for example "Europe Sees U.S. Return to Policy of 'Big Stick'" for a summary of the views of European newspapers that likened the intervention to "to an out-of-date relic of a past era", *Los Angeles Times*, May 3, 1965

the intervention itself, describing the different periods of the intervention, which together constituted US regime change. Section Three turns to the main argument of the chapter, describing how US expectations, Bosch's obstruction and the perception thereof produced high levels of frustration within the Johnson administration. Section Four discusses the security-threat argument, the economic-interest argument, and the hegemonic-control argument as three common alternative explanations for Johnson's intervention. Section Five concludes.

### **The Constitutionalist Uprising**

The immediate backdrop to Lyndon B. Johnson's decision to land US marines on Dominican soil was the imminent victory of the constitutionalist rebellion<sup>574</sup> that had unseated the leader of the Dominican junta and was about to defeat the military forces of the struggling regime. The constitutionalist uprising began on April 24, 1965, when Captain Mario Pena Taveras, "one of the staunchest and most enterprising of the constitutionalists", arrested army chief of staff General Rivera Cuesta and his deputy.<sup>575</sup> Other constitutionalist army officers seized two military bases, while the civilian leader of the uprising, Joao Francisco Pena Gomez, announced the downfall of Donald Reid Cabral, the civilian head of the junta, and the return to constitutionality.<sup>576</sup> Although anti-regime demonstrators flooded the streets, the regime recaptured a seized radio station, arrested Pena Gomez, and declared that the coup had failed.<sup>577</sup> The US embassy in Santo Domingo, relying on information from the regime, was confident that the civilian junta was in control of the situation. While still trying to ascertain the nature of the uprising and its main actors, the embassy told Washington that the uprising was confined to a limited number of Army officers.<sup>578</sup>

The following days belied the embassy's initial assessment. Not only was the split within the Dominican Army caused by Rivera Cuesta's arrest more serious than the regime had wished, but also were Cabral's prospects to stay in power severely compromised, as even

---

<sup>574</sup> The terms rebellion, rebels and constitutionalists are used as interchangeable designations for Bosch supporters.

<sup>575</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 159.

<sup>576</sup> Despite the heterogeneous and spontaneous nature of the 1965 uprising, the return to the 1963 constitution, which was enacted during Juan Bosch's short Presidential tenure and nullified in September 1963, was the central claim of the rebels. Given that Donald Reid Cabral's coming into power was a direct consequence of Juan Bosch's 1963 overthrow, the constitutionalists considered Cabral's rule as unconstitutional and demanded Bosch's return to power. For a detailed account of Dominican history between Rafael Trujillo's assassination in 1961 and Bosch's overthrow in September 1963, see Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America*, 35-48.

<sup>577</sup> "Dominicans Fail in Coup, Junta Says", *Chicago Tribune*, April 25, 1965. "Dominican Junta Balks Revolt Plot", *Washington Post*, April 25, 1965.

<sup>578</sup> Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention*, 65-66.

generals in the Dominican military who were apprehensive of the constitutionalist uprising, did not support the civilian leader. Characterizing the asymmetric relationship between the Triumvirate led by Cabral and the military leaders, Piero Gleijeses pointedly asserts: "Reid Cabral was merely a nice young man who had been placed at the head of the government by the armed forces, to which he was responsible".<sup>579</sup> When the rebels entered Santo Domingo from their camps outside the capital in the morning of April 25, Cabral's generals did nothing to prevent their advance. This allowed the rebels to seize the Dominican capital without any resistance from Reid Cabral's troops, storm the Presidential Palace in downtown Santo Domingo, and arrest the vanquished Triumvir.<sup>580</sup> Since Juan Bosch was in exile at that time, the last President of the Dominican parliament before Bosch's overthrow in September 1963, Jose Rafael Molina Urena, was named provisional constitutional President, being the first in line of succession among those former officeholders not in exile according to the 1963 constitution.<sup>581</sup> To make clear what the political goal of the uprising was, Colonel Francisco Caamano announced that the former President Juan Bosch would return from exile in "the shortest possible time" to reassume the presidency and "to return to the people what was taken from the people".<sup>582</sup>

As events unfolded, the constitutionalist overthrow of the Triumvirate did not result in Juan Bosch's return from exile, but rather completed the split within the Dominican armed forces. Only few hours after the storming of the Presidential Palace on April 25, the Dominican air force under General Juan de Los Santos ordered the bombing of the Palace, triggering a bloody conflict between constitutionalists and conservative army generals who opposed a return to constitutionality. Minutes before the strafing, intense negotiations between the military chief of the constitutionalists, Miguel Hernando Ramirez, and representatives from the air force, police and navy had failed to reach an agreement because Hernando Ramirez, insisting on a return to constitutionality, rejected the establishment of a military junta, the loyalists' preferred solution.<sup>583</sup> The strafing of the Palace escalated the domestic Dominican confrontation with means unprecedented, as it was "the first time that Dominican planes had strafed Dominican civilians".<sup>584</sup> Yet, the constitutionalists led by

---

<sup>579</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 163.

<sup>580</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>581</sup> Jerome Slater, *Intervention and Negotiation: The United States and the Dominican Revolution* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), 22-23.

<sup>582</sup> "Dominican Coup Deposes Regime", *New York Times*, April 26, 1965.

<sup>583</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 191, 194.

<sup>584</sup> Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention*, 202. Note that US complicity with the strafing is contested. According to Juan Bosch, the "bombing was specially and specifically ordered by the American military



Ramirez were convinced that the air force and other anti-Bosch generals would soon give up and accept the supremacy of constitutionalist forces in Santo Domingo, not least because they expected the United States to recognize the return to constitutionality.<sup>585</sup>

April 26, the third day of the revolt, saw Santo Domingo's residents reentering the fray. As the strafing by the loyalist air force continued, killing as many as fifty people, thousands of Dominicans supporting the constitutionalist cause took to the streets as on the first day of the revolt, but this time armed by Molina Urena's provisional government with submachine guns and rifles.<sup>586</sup> Violence gripped the Dominican capital, as demonstrators attacked police stations. Popular participation notwithstanding, the loyalist forces seemed to gain the upper hand. In addition to General Elias Wessin y Wessin's tanks ready to break into the city from the east and three days of incessant bombing by General de Los Santos' air force, an army regiment joined the anti-constitutionalists on April 27, beginning to move towards the capital from the west, while in the afternoon, General Wessin's tanks moved into the city crossing the Duarte Bridge in the capital's east.<sup>587</sup> Heavy fighting broke out, as protestors tried to stop the advancement of tanks into the city. In the words of Abraham Lowenthal, "[h]undreds of people – some soldiers, mostly civilians – were killed or wounded in the heavy fighting around the bridge, the bloodiest single battle in Dominican history".<sup>588</sup> The situation looked so desperate for the constitutionalists that by the afternoon of the 27<sup>th</sup> "virtually the entire PRD [the constitutionalists' party] had deserted".<sup>589</sup> When finally Molina Urena resigned as well, seeking asylum in the Colombian embassy, loyalists claimed victory and American media declared the end of the revolt.<sup>590</sup>

Had the conflict ended with Molina Urena's resignation and had all constitutionalists surrendered, US military intervention would have become obsolete. In a dramatic turn of events, however, thousands of civilians joined by the hard core of constitutionalist soldiers and officers, pushed Wessin's tanks back, forcing them to retreat out of Santo Domingo. Being more than a battle in which the materially inferior side gained the upper hand, the

---

mission [to Santo Domingo]" (Juan Bosch, *Pentagonism: A Substitute for Imperialism* (New York: Grove Press, 1968), 107).

<sup>585</sup> American media shared this assessment predicting that "[i]f Bosch should return to power, the U.S. apparently would have little choice but to recognize him". See "U.S. Seeks Dominican Cease-Fire", *Los Angeles Times*, April 27, 1965.

<sup>586</sup> "U.S. to Evacuate Nationals Today in Dominican Crisis", *New York Times*, April 27, 1965.

<sup>587</sup> "Dominican Revolt Fails After a Day of Savage Battle", *New York Times*, April 28, 1965.

<sup>588</sup> Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention*, 93.

<sup>589</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 241.

<sup>590</sup> "Crush Dominican Revolt". *Chicago Tribune*, April 28, 1965.

victory of the masses supporting the constitutionalists was an unprecedented event in Dominican history, as Dan Kurzman illustrates:

[a]t the moment when the tanks started to recede, history reached a turning point for the Dominican people. In a sense, it was the climax for them of more than 450 years of suppression, subjugation, and hopelessness [...]. Always had they been at the mercy of men with guns [...]. They [the people] realized for the first time that they possessed a strength they had never before imagined could be theirs.<sup>591</sup>

The "miracle at the [Duarte] bridge"<sup>592</sup> gave the constitutionalists new determination. On the next day, April 28, Francisco Caamano, now the leader of the revolt, led new attacks on police stations, while loyalist troops were demoralized and on the brink of collapse. It was this dire state of the loyalists, unable to defeat the constitutionalist revolt, that prompted the United States to intervene with its own forces. Before landing marines, the United States "urged the formation of a junta", hoping to reunite the fragmented and demoralized forces of the loyalists. The new head of the loyalist junta, Colonel Pedro Bartolome Benoit, immediately requested American forces. Tapley W. Bennett, American Ambassador in Santo Domingo, accepted the request and in the evening of April 28, the American navy sent five hundred marines ashore,<sup>593</sup> being the first deployment of marines in the hemisphere since 1927 and heralding the start of US regime change.<sup>594</sup>

### **Johnson Decides to Intervene**

Designed to be a limited intervention that would quickly end violence and strife, the deployment of US troops in the Dominican Republic increased dramatically in the days following the landing of marines on April 28. The primary goal of the intervention, namely to prevent a loyalist defeat, did not change throughout the military operation.<sup>595</sup> What did change, however, was the belief in the ability of the loyalists to defeat the constitutionalists and reestablish stability without overt American military support. Up until the day of the intervention, the American embassy in Santo Domingo was convinced that anti-Bosch forces would prevail. On April 27, the State Department predicted that "General Wessin would soon control Santo Domingo".<sup>596</sup> Then the "miracle at the bridge" happened, which forced the US

---

<sup>591</sup> Dan Kurzman, *Santo Domingo: Revolt of the Damned* (New York: Van Rees, 1965), 166-167.

<sup>592</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 249.

<sup>593</sup> Center for Strategic Studies, *Dominican Action, 1965: Intervention or Cooperation?*, *Special Report Series* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic Studies, Georgetown University, 1966), 32-33; 36.

<sup>594</sup> In 1927, marines landed in Nicaragua and stayed until 1933. See "Marines Enter Domingo", *Chicago Tribune*, April 29, 1965.

<sup>595</sup> Indeed, preventing a loyalist defeat had been the goal of the US even before troops were landed.

<sup>596</sup> Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention*, 95.

to reconsider its initial assessment. When fifteen hundred more marines landed on April 29, the US military still hoped to be able to avoid being dragged into the fighting.<sup>597</sup> Ambassador Bennett expressed his optimism that "additional Marine support would spur the San Isidro forces [loyalists] on".<sup>598</sup> Bennett's optimism, however, was unfounded. The limited intervention did not reinvigorate the loyalists' will to fight, but rather raised hopes that the US would adopt a more proactive stance and fight the loyalists' war against the constitutionalists. What made matters even worse was the fact that to the extent that Colonel Caamano did not cease to mount constitutionalist attacks, he did not seem to be intimidated by the United States entering the fray.<sup>599</sup> Thus, more US troops landed in the Dominican Republic in the following days: On April 30, two thousand paratroopers of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne reached Santo Domingo, kicking off a military buildup that reached 23,000 troops within the next ten days.<sup>600</sup> By then, the realities on the ground coupled with the unexpected resilience of the constitutionalists had triggered the transformation of a limited intervention into a full-scale invasion.

In the first phase of the intervention, US policy was based on a double strategy of preventing both a constitutionalist victory and a direct engagement in armed fighting. After capturing the Duarte Bridge and establishing control of its western approach, the US worked first on a cease-fire agreement between the two factions that was mandated through American efforts at the OAS. Under the supervision of special envoy John B. Martin, who himself had been Ambassador in Santo Domingo under John F. Kennedy, both constitutionalist and junta representatives acceded to OAS' call for a halt in the fighting.<sup>601</sup> Immediately after securing the agreement, the US forcefully moved to curb the constitutionalists' ability to continue its military advances. Despite Martin's pledge to Francisco Caamano that US forces would adhere to their position, paratroopers advanced from the Duarte Bridge into the center of Santo Domingo and established a narrow corridor, linking up to marines in the western sector of the city, sealing off constitutionalist forces in the center and bisecting them from their

---

<sup>597</sup> Despite hopes of being able to avoid fighting, newspaper reports show that US forces "had their first taste of combat" already on April 29. See "Marines Kill Four Dominican Snipers", *Washington Post*, April 30, 1965.

<sup>598</sup> John B. Martin, *Overtaken by Events: The Dominican Crisis from the Fall of Trujillo to the Civil War* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1966), 659.

<sup>599</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 257.

<sup>600</sup> Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama*, 69.

<sup>601</sup> Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention*, 122.

strongholds north of the corridor.<sup>602</sup> In doing so, this policy "permitted U.S. forces to adopt a more nearly neutral stance in the days and weeks that followed".<sup>603</sup>

Despite the cease-fire and US efforts to bring the ongoing violence under control, the constitutionalists did not knuckle under to the superiority of US forces. Trying to govern the limited sector in downtown Santo Domingo that was still under their control, the constitutionalists elected Colonel Francisco Caamano as constitutional President of the Dominican Republic just one day after the US had sealed them off from the rest of the city.<sup>604</sup> Faced with the constitutionalists' unwillingness to surrender, the United States opened negotiations to find a peaceful settlement to the protracted strife. The opening of talks, however, did not prevent the United States from turning a blind eye on a loyalist military offensive north of the corridor: while the talks were going on, loyalists started what has come to be known as Operation *Limpieza* ("cleanup"), in which as many as five hundred civilians<sup>605</sup> and constitutionalist rebels died during the eight days of the attack between May 14 and May 21.<sup>606</sup> Already at the time, news reports saw contradictions between the United States' claim to impartiality and that "U.S. military forces appear[ed] to be aiding the junta troops of Gen. Antonio Imbert in their campaign to knock out the rebel forces militarily".<sup>607</sup>

Ushering in the second phase of US regime change in the Dominican Republic, Hector Garcia Godoy, who had served as a diplomat both under Trujillo and Bosch, became provisional President on September 3, 1965. Detached from politics after the military coup of 1963 and a wealthy businessman,<sup>608</sup> he was the "best man available" because of his willingness to work closely with the US and adopt a firm stance against Dominican Communists.<sup>609</sup> His appointment put an end to both the constitutionalists' and loyalists' month-long efforts at gaining recognition as the sole legitimate representative of the country. The loyalist Government of National Reconstruction (GNR) collapsed when its leader

---

<sup>602</sup> "U.S. Troops Split Dominican Rebels", *New York Times*, May 4, 1965. The article also cites Francisco Caamano lamenting the United States' involvement in the conflict: "unfortunately, our [constitutionalists'] problem is no longer with the junta troops, but with the American troops".

<sup>603</sup> Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention*, 131.

<sup>604</sup> Halliday, *Caamaño in London: The Exile of a Latin American Revolutionary*, 17. For the purpose of electing Caamano, the Dominican National Congress convened on May 3, 1965, which was only its third session since Bosch's overthrow in September 1963. See Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 399.

<sup>605</sup> This is an estimate of a US military attaché at the time. See "Junta Captures Radio, Bars Any Compromise", *Washington Post*, May 20, 1965.

<sup>606</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 264.

<sup>607</sup> "U.S. Policy, Troops Appear at Odds on Dominican Aim", *Washington Post*, May 21, 1965.

<sup>608</sup> "Dominican President", *New York Times*, September 4, 1965.

<sup>609</sup> "Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State", June 27, 1965, *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1964-1968, XXXII (112), 282.

General Antonio Imbert resigned on August 30.<sup>610</sup> On September 3, when Francisco Caamano stepped down from his position as constitutional President under the 1963 constitution, lamenting the "humiliation to which the government of the United States of America subjected the Dominican Republic with its military invasion",<sup>611</sup> the constitutionalists yielded to the realities on the ground, too.

On June 1, nine months after Godoy had come into power, presidential elections were held. The US-favored candidate, Joaquin Balaguer, won the elections with 56 percent of the votes, while former President Juan Bosch surprisingly lost with a vote share of 39 percent. Bosch's defeat sealed the failure of the constitutionalists to regain power. The defeat at the polls, the last in a series of bitter defeats since the uprising of April 1965, was so traumatizing to Bosch and his supporters that the constitutionalists refused to accept Balaguer's victory until more than two weeks after the election. In the immediate aftermath of the election, protests flared up, causing deadly confrontations between left-wing militants and security forces three days after the election,<sup>612</sup> while officials of Bosch's Revolutionary Party considered the election to be fraudulent and themselves to "have been cheated out of the election".<sup>613</sup> Finally, on June 13, Bosch acknowledged his defeat, while still claiming to have found proof of fraud, hinting at US involvement in the election.<sup>614</sup> Indeed, the Johnson administration had established a covert program to funnel funds to Balaguer's electoral campaign. Financial support and propaganda in favor of Balaguer were President Johnson's explicit desire, as Richard Helms, CIA Acting Director explained in a memorandum:

[H]e [President Johnson] expected the Agency [CIA] to devote the necessary personnel and material resources in the Dominican Republic required to win the presidential election for the candidate favored by the United States Government. The President's statements were unequivocal. He wants to win the election, and he expects the Agency to arrange for this to happen.<sup>615</sup>

Going further, Piero Gleijeses argues that what undermined Bosch's victory was not only US support for Balaguer's campaign, but also Godoy's interim presidency that prevented a collapse of the loyalist armed forces and so made "Bosch's victory at the polls in June 1966 highly unlikely".<sup>616</sup> After Balaguer assumed the presidency on July 1, 1966, the last IAPF

---

<sup>610</sup> Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama*, 87.

<sup>611</sup> Caamano quoted in Halliday, *Caamaño in London: The Exile of a Latin American Revolutionary*, 19.

<sup>612</sup> "Santo Domingo Quiet After Bitter Election", *Los Angeles Times*, June 6, 1966.

<sup>613</sup> "Vote Fraud Cry Splits Dominicans", *Los Angeles Times*, June 7, 1966.

<sup>614</sup> "Bosch Concedes Loss to Balaguer", *New York Times*, June 14, 1966.

<sup>615</sup> "Memorandum From Acting Director of Central Intelligence Helms to the Deputy Director for Plans of the Central Intelligence Agency (Fitzgerald)", December 19, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (151), 358.

<sup>616</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 299.

troops left the country on September 21, bringing the United States' regime change operation in the Dominican Republic to its formal end.<sup>617</sup>

## **Emotional Frustration and Regime Change**

### *US Hegemonic Expectations Towards the Dominican Republic*

As this section shows, the US had hegemonic towards the Dominican leadership long before the Lyndon B. Johnson's 1965 Dominican intervention. The Cuban Revolution and the ouster of Fulgencio Batista in January 1959 made the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations rethink their approach towards the region which culminated in the proclamation of the Alliance for Progress in 1961, specifying new criteria of desirable state conduct in Latin America which Johnson willfully adopted in his foreign policy towards the Dominican Republic.

Lyndon Johnson was not the first US President with hegemonic expectations towards the Dominican Republic and towards the wider region, more broadly speaking. At least since the beginning of the twentieth century, when Theodore Roosevelt enunciated his Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine, relations between the US and the Dominican Republic were marked by the role of regional superiority that the United States assigned to itself. Indeed, Roosevelt's 1904 Corollary had its origins in the US approach towards the Dominican Republic, was shaped by developments there and would therefore not have been conceivable without the domestic unrest in the Caribbean nation that prompted Roosevelt to elevate his expectations of domestic order and stability in hemispheric nations to a basic principle of US foreign policy towards the region.<sup>618</sup> Expectations of domestic stability and order towards Latin American leaders, attached to the explicit threat of military intervention, persisted across different US administrations up until the 1930s, when "the Roosevelt Corollary was disavowed by Herbert Hoover and Franklin D. Roosevelt".<sup>619</sup> It was above all Franklin Roosevelt who, in his 1933 inaugural address, "dedicated this Nation [the US] to the policy of the good neighbor",<sup>620</sup> affirming in a later speech that "the definite policy of the United States

---

<sup>617</sup> Slater, *Intervention and Negotiation: The United States and the Dominican Revolution*, 185.

<sup>618</sup> Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934*, 23-24, Jay Sexton, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2011), 228-229, Veaser, "Inventing Dollar Diplomacy: The Gilded-Age Origins of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine," 302-303.

<sup>619</sup> H. W. Brands, "Presidential Doctrines: An Introduction," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2006): 2.

<sup>620</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Inaugural Address, March 4* (1933 [cited September 4 2014]); available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14473>.

from now on is one opposed to armed intervention".<sup>621</sup> Yet, as serious and novel as Franklin Roosevelt's repudiation of Theodore Roosevelt's Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine was, it solely disavowed the use of force, but not the extent of US expectations towards the region, which continued to exhibit a vision of an unequal distribution of duties and responsibilities in the hemisphere: in the words of Stephen Rabe, "[Franklin] Roosevelt administration expected Latin Americans to respect U.S. foreign investments and to follow the U.S. lead on the global stage",<sup>622</sup> making the non-intervention pledge conditional upon the extent to which states in the region would accept a subordinate position vis-à-vis the United States.

Growing competition with the Soviet Union after the end of World War II raised the importance of US expectations towards states in the Western hemisphere. The priority of containing Soviet influence, famously championed by George Kennan who defined containment as the "adroit and vigilant application of counter-force at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points", arguing that "the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies",<sup>623</sup> made the prevention of Communist takeovers in the Western hemisphere an unavoidable necessity in the minds of US leaders. Both Harry S. Truman and his successor Dwight D. Eisenhower expected Latin American leaders to keep a tight grip on their societies in order to prevent any Communist penetration. Convinced that authoritarian regimes would fare better in keeping internal stability, the expectation of these US Presidents oftentimes amounted to open support for notorious Latin American strongmen, again best captured by Kennan's reasoning that the US "should not hesitate before police repression by the local government" and that "[i]t is better to have a strong regime in power than a liberal government if it is indulgent and relaxed and penetrated by Communists".<sup>624</sup>

The established notion in the minds of US leaders that Latin American dictators would better conform to US expectations of domestic order and stability than more

---

<sup>621</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, *Address Before the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, December 28* (1933 [cited September 4 2014]); available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=14593>. For a history of Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy, see Bryce Wood, *The Making of the Good Neighbor Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), Bryce Wood, *The Dismantling of the Good Neighbor Policy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985). As early as 1928, Roosevelt wrote that "[s]ingle-handed intervention by us in the internal affairs of other nations must end", see Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Our Foreign Policy: A Democratic View," *Foreign Affairs* 6, no. 4 (1928): 585.

<sup>622</sup> Stephen G. Rabe, "The Johnson Doctrine," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (2006): 51.

<sup>623</sup> George F. Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," 25, no. 4 (1947): 575, 576.

<sup>624</sup> Kennan quoted in LaFeber, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America*, 109. See also Stephen G. Rabe, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), Rabe, "The Johnson Doctrine," 51-52.

democratic forms of government, received a severe blow when the Cuban Revolution unseated US long-time ally Fulgencio Batista. Rather than being a bulwark against Communist penetration, Batista's shocking inability to prevent Fidel Castro from gaining power, made it "painfully obvious that rightist dictatorships [...] were creating an environment ripe for Communist exploitation".<sup>625</sup> This reappraisal of the benefits of collaborating with Latin American dictators was so fundamental that it led to a cautious readjustment of US relations with the Dominican Republic under US President Eisenhower.<sup>626</sup> Worried that the brutal rule of Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo would create conditions in the country similar to pre-revolutionary Cuba, the US government "turned against its client of three decades",<sup>627</sup> deciding in November 1959 that the Dominican strongman had to cede power.<sup>628</sup>

The 1959 Cuban Revolution changed not only the perceived relationship between regime type and the ability to maintain domestic order and stability, but also the US government's expectations towards the region. John F. Kennedy, Eisenhower's presidential successor, systematically expanded the set of expectations the US would have towards the Dominican Republic and other states in the Western hemisphere as a response to Fidel Castro's successful revolution. Still wishing to consign domestic unrest and regime contestation to oblivion in hemispheric states, Kennedy pushed for an ambitious regional modernization project almost immediately upon taking office. On March 13, 1961, less than two months into his presidential term, the new US President announced what has been called a "Marshall Plan for Latin America":<sup>629</sup> the Alliance for Progress. This new policy, in Kennedy's own words "a vast cooperative effort, unparalleled in magnitude and nobility of purpose",<sup>630</sup> aimed at modernizing Latin American societies in a way that would make them

---

<sup>625</sup> Slater, "Democracy versus Stability: The Recent Latin American Policy of the United States," 172. According to Russell Crandall, "[i]t is difficult to underemphasize the impact that Fidel Castro's rapidly consolidated Marxist revolution in Cuba had on American policymakers", see Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama*, 19-20.

<sup>626</sup> According to an alternative account, the way vice President Richard Nixon was harassed during his May 1958 "goodwill" tour of South America by violent demonstrators was the actual reason for the change in US foreign policy towards the region; see Marvin R. Zahniser and W. Michael Weis, "A Diplomatic Pearl Harbor? Richard Nixon's Goodwill Mission to Latin America in 1958," *Diplomatic History* 13, no. 2 (1989). For the disintegration of a number of dictatorial regimes throughout the hemisphere in the late 1950s, see Tad Szulc, *Twilight of the Tyrants* (New York: Holt, 1959).

<sup>627</sup> Stephen G. Rabe, "The Caribbean Triangle: Betancourt, Castro, and Trujillo and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1958–1963," *Diplomatic History* 20, no. 1 (1996): 64.

<sup>628</sup> Rabe, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America*, 34-35.

<sup>629</sup> Rabe, "The Caribbean Triangle: Betancourt, Castro, and Trujillo and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1958–1963," 71.

<sup>630</sup> John F. Kennedy, *Address at a White House Reception for Members of Congress and for the Diplomatic Corps of the Latin American Republics, March 13 (1961 [cited September 7 2014])*; available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=8531&st=&st1=>. See also Jon Roper, "John F. Kennedy and



both more stable and more liberal. In August 1961, the signing of the Charter of Punta del Este formally inaugurated the Alliance, with the United States pledging to provide \$20 billion in investment over the next ten years to reach an annual growth rate of 5.5 percent in Latin American countries.<sup>631</sup>

What Kennedy, who was convinced that "only the most determined efforts of the American nations themselves can bring success to this effort [the Alliance]",<sup>632</sup> expected from his fellow hemispheric governments was not only capital investment of \$80 billion in the course of one decade, but, more importantly, a strict implementation of a particular model of modernization that his administration had set up. This developmental model was inspired by Walt W. Rostow's modernization theory which propagated that "economic development followed discernible paths in Western and the United States" and that "it could be followed by other nations".<sup>633</sup> In order to move Latin American countries to the next economic stage, they needed, according to Rostow, a "well-funded economic aid program" that "could serve as [a] sharp stimulus".<sup>634</sup> This economic aid program was the Alliance for Progress. In the minds of Kennedy and his administration officials, modernization in Latin American would follow a pre-defined path that the US President expected states in the region to follow.<sup>635</sup> Apart from expectations regarding the economic dimension of Kennedy's new foreign policy initiative, the administration's support for liberal governments in the region was predicated upon how credible their anti-Communism was. After all, as much as the Alliance for Progress was an economic project to facilitate modernization and progress, its main rationale was political, i.e. to "immunize Latin America against Castro-type revolutions",<sup>636</sup> evidenced by

---

Lyndon Johnson," in *US Foreign Policy and Democracy Promotion*, ed. Michael Cox, Timothy J. Lynch, and Nicolas Bouchet (London: Routledge, 2013), 108-109.

<sup>631</sup> Schmitz, *Thank God They're On Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965*, 243.

<sup>632</sup> Kennedy, *Address at a White House Reception for Members of Congress and for the Diplomatic Corps of the Latin American Republics, March 13* ([cited]).

<sup>633</sup> Schmitz, *Thank God They're On Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965*, 239. According to Rostow, "[i]t is possible to identify all societies, in their economic dimensions, as lying within one of five categories: the traditional society, the preconditions for take-off, the take-off, the drive to maturity, and the age of high mass-consumption", see Walt W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 4.

<sup>634</sup> Jeffrey F. Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy: The Alliance for Progress in Latin America* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 21.

<sup>635</sup> As Stephen Rabe critically remarks, "[t]he assumption that 'modern' Latin Americans wanted to replicate superior U.S.-style institutions and inculcate Anglo-American values in their societies belied the concept of an 'alliance'. See Stephen G. Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 89.

<sup>636</sup> Frank Costigliola, "The Foreign Policy of Kennedy and Johnson in the Cold War," in *Cambridge History of the Cold War*, ed. Odd Arne Westad and Melvyn P. Leffler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 121.

an internal task force report charged with formulating Kennedy's approach to Latin America before he took office. The report declared that the

greatest single task of American diplomacy in Latin America is to divorce the inevitable and necessary Latin American social transformation from connection with and prevent its capture by overseas Communist Power politics.<sup>637</sup>

Countries in the region were thus not only expected to follow a specific economic path of development, but also a political one that lived up to the promise of resisting any Communist influence on their regimes.<sup>638</sup>

With respect to the fulfillment of its expectations of anti-Communist political freedom paired with economic modernization and material progress stimulated by the Alliance for Progress, it was the Dominican Republic in which the Kennedy administration put exceptionally high hopes. In fact, expectations were so high that the administration hoped to turn the Caribbean nation into a "showcase for democracy", proving that the "goals of the Alliance [for Progress] could be successfully implemented".<sup>639</sup> At the beginning of his presidential term, Kennedy firmly believed that the Dominican Republic could set an example for the whole region by combining US-inspired economic progress, strict anti-Communism, and a more liberal political order. Referring to the end of Trujillo's regime in his 1962 state of the union address, the US President proclaimed enthusiastically and confidently that "[t]he people of the Dominican Republic, with our firm encouragement and help [...], are safely passing through the treacherous course from dictatorship through disorder towards democracy".<sup>640</sup> To assist the Dominican Republic on its path towards democracy, the Kennedy administration tried to control "the threat from the far left (Castro/Communist) and the far right (Trujillistas)" by following a plan of action that envisaged free elections.<sup>641</sup> After months of preparation, elections took finally place on December 20, 1962.<sup>642</sup> In a landslide

---

<sup>637</sup> "Report From the Task Force on Immediate Latin American Problems to President-elect Kennedy", January 4, 1961, *FRUS, 1961-1963*, XII (2), 3-4.

<sup>638</sup> Stephen Rabe argues that "[t]he Kennedy administration would not [...] trust any progressive leader or group deemed suspect on the issues of Castro and communism". See Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America*, 95-96.

<sup>639</sup> Michael R. Hall, *Sugar and Power in the Dominican Republic: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the Trujillos* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2000), 112. See also Peter G. Felten, "The Path to Dissent: Johnson, Fulbright, and the 1965 Intervention in the Dominican Republic," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 26, no. 4 (1996): 1009-1010; Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 94.

<sup>640</sup> John F. Kennedy, *Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 11* (1962 [cited September 11 2014]); available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=9082>.

<sup>641</sup> "Department of State Policy Directive: Dominican Republic: Plan of Action for Period from Present to February 1963", May 15, 1962, *FRUS, 1961-1963*, XII (342), 704.

<sup>642</sup> Note that although the provisionally governing council was mandated to already hold "elections for delegates to a constitutional convention on August 15", it was later decided to merge these elections with the Presidential

victory, Juan Bosch won the presidential election by a two-to-one margin, while his party, the left-of-center Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD), won "25 of the 27 members of the Senate and 52 of the 74 members of the Chamber of Deputies" in the congressional election.<sup>643</sup> Immediately upon Bosch's electoral victory, the Kennedy administration invited the Dominican President-elect to Washington, signaling its willingness to closely collaborate with the new Dominican government. Bosch himself felt "a truly sincere willingness on the part of the White House, not just President Kennedy, but also his assistants, to help" the Dominican leadership in its efforts to modernize the country.<sup>644</sup> Indeed, evidenced by a secret memorandum, the Kennedy administration believed, despite feeling "somewhat tentative about making an appraisal of Bosch at this point [January 1963]",<sup>645</sup> that "Dr. Bosch responded with a strong endorsement of the Alliance for Progress".<sup>646</sup> As a representative of the democratic left, Bosch was "the best hope of bringing modernization to Latin America without violence and without stirring up hatred for the *yanqui*".<sup>647</sup>

#### *Dominican Obstruction*

The Kennedy administration's high hopes in Juan Bosch and in the much-desired Dominican showcase for Kennedy's ambitious modernization project in the Western hemisphere very soon turned into bitter disillusionment. Rather than representing a new type of Latin American leader who would enact Kennedy's envisioned and delicate balance between economic development, democracy and strict anti-Communism, the new Dominican President preferred to pursue his own designs for economic and political development in his country. Bosch's presidency proved to be especially obstructive to Kennedy's hegemonic expectations in terms of implementing the Alliance for Progress and the question of how to deal with Dominican Communists domestically.

During his brief seven-month presidency, Juan Bosch's attitude towards the Alliance for Progress was ambivalent. While he embraced the necessity of outside economic aid for his country's development, his approach towards the program was rather pragmatic, welcoming aid programs he deemed useful, but not shying away from criticizing aspects he

---

and congressional elections on December 20, 1962. See Jonathan Hartlyn, *The Struggle for Democratic Politics in the Dominican Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 77.

<sup>643</sup> Robert J. Alexander, *Latin American Political Parties* (New York: Praeger, 1973), 293.

<sup>644</sup> Juan Bosch, recorded interview by Lloyd N. Cutler, June 9, 1964, *John F. Kennedy Library Oral History Program*.

<sup>645</sup> "Memorandum From the President's Special Assistant (Dungan) to President Kennedy", January 10, 1963, *FRUS, 1961-1963*, XII (352), 721.

<sup>646</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation", January 10, 1963, *FRUS, 1961-1963*, XII (353), 723.

<sup>647</sup> Richard J. Barnett, *Intervention and Revolution: The United States in the Third World* (London: Paladin, 1968), 161.

deemed inadequate or insufficient. In his first conversation with US President Kennedy, Bosch pointed out that the Dominican Republic "had short-term needs as a result of unemployment, under-investment, a lack of farm-to-market roads and inefficient and slow production", needs that Bosch thought were not satisfied by the long-term goals of the Alliance for Progress.<sup>648</sup> When the Dominican President realized that American funds were insufficient and that Kennedy was preoccupied with the "American balance of payments problem and the sizable gold and dollar drain",<sup>649</sup> he turned to alternative sources, securing a "loan from a European banking consortium in April 1963".<sup>650</sup> According to the US Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, John B. Martin, the Dominican President wished "to avoid public identification with [the United States] through AID and the Alianza", refused "to publicly embrace the Alianza", and worse, was "rumored to have said that he will sign no more Alianza agreements".<sup>651</sup> But Bosch not only looked for other ways to receive economic aid, he also professed a type of economic nationalism that was obstructive to the expectations of the Kennedy administration. His efforts at balancing the Dominican budget by curbing state expenditures threatened to undermine the US desire to export American products to the island, went against the US expectation of domestic Dominican capital investment, and irritated "New Deal-style liberal sensibilities",<sup>652</sup> evidenced by John B. Martin, US Ambassador to the Dominican Republic, who argued that Bosch "was running the government like an old lady saving string".<sup>653</sup>

Apart from Bosch's intransigence with regard to the implementation of the Alliance for Progress, what constituted the most severe obstruction to Kennedy's expectations towards the island was the Dominican President's refusal to embrace the most fundamental goal of the modernization project, i.e. US-style resistance towards Communist influence in the Dominican Republic. To be sure, Bosch's presidency was decidedly committed to anti-Communism. In a speech shortly after his inauguration, Bosch declared in March 1963 that the choice before his country was one between democracy and Communism, with Communism equaling "death, war, destruction and the loss of all our blessings".<sup>654</sup> His

---

<sup>648</sup> "Memorandum of Conversation", January 10, 1963, *FRUS, 1961-1963*, XII (353), 723.

<sup>649</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>650</sup> LeeAnna Yarbrough Keith, "The Imperial Mind and United States Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1961--1966" (Ph.D., The University of Connecticut, 1999), 135.

<sup>651</sup> "Ambassador Martin to Department of State: Bosch's First Two Months", April 28, 1963, *DDRS, Document Number CK3100379122*. The Spanish term Alianza, referring to the Alliance for Progress, is widely used in government documents.

<sup>652</sup> Keith, "The Imperial Mind and United States Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1961--1966", 137.

<sup>653</sup> Martin, *Overtaken by Events: The Dominican Crisis from the Fall of Trujillo to the Civil War*, 351.

<sup>654</sup> Bosch quoted in Theodore Draper, "Bosch and Communism," *New Leader* 46 (1963): 10.

democratic credentials were so impeccable that it has been correctly noted that he "took power inflexibly determined to set an example of peaceful, tolerant, constructive democracy for this [his] and future generations".<sup>655</sup> Communists in the Dominican Republic understood Bosch's belief in democratic government, arguing that he was nothing but a "pawn of Yankee imperialism".<sup>656</sup>

As much as the Dominican President was opposed to Communism, he was not willing to follow US expectations and persecute his political adversaries. As Patrick Iber correctly puts it, Bosch "thought that the most effective anti-Communist policy for the Dominican Republic was one that refused to make martyrs of the small and ineffective Communist Party by outlawing its activity",<sup>657</sup> a policy that was in stark contrast to US expectations of McCarthyism and thus highly obstructive. Convinced that "any attempts to suppress the native Communists by direct persecution only succeeds in turning them into guerillas and terrorists",<sup>658</sup> Bosch allowed a number of Communist activists to return from their exile and to resume their political activities in the country.<sup>659</sup> Even retrospectively, the Dominican President argued that his strategy of inclusion was effective in neutralizing Communist subversion. In August 1965, Bosch, looking back on his presidency, wrote that

[I]ttle by little, as the days passed, the non-Communist and anti-Communist members of the June 14th Movement [a leftist anti-Trujillo movement] were gaining ground against the Communists, since they were able to prove to their companions that my [Bosch's] democratic government neither persecuted them nor took orders from Washington.<sup>660</sup>

The main achievement of his term, the new Dominican constitution of 1963, was a testimony to Bosch's conviction that civil liberties were for all, including Communists, granting unprecedented rights, both political and economic, to the Dominican people.<sup>661</sup>

Bosch's inclusive vision for his country obstructed the Kennedy administration's desire to isolate and exclude any kind of Communist activity in the Dominican Republic. While the Dominican President's understanding of democratic openness was in line with some US officials, most notably with supreme court justice William O. Douglas who was an

---

<sup>655</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>656</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 101.

<sup>657</sup> Patrick J. Iber, "'Who Will Impose Democracy?': Sacha Volman and the Contradictions of CIA Support for the Anticommunist Left in Latin America," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 5 (2013): 1018.

<sup>658</sup> Bosch quoted in Draper, "Bosch and Communism," 10.

<sup>659</sup> Ibid.

<sup>660</sup> Juan Bosch, "Communism and Democracy in the Dominican Republic," *Saturday Review*, August 7 1965, 15.

<sup>661</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 87-89. See also Kurzman, *Santo Domingo: Revolt of the Damned*, 92-93. Testifying to his inclusive vision for the Dominican Republic, Bosch argued that "[a] democratic government cannot be democratic for some and dictatorial for others", see Draper, "Bosch and Communism," 10.

ardent defender of free speech and dissented from a US supreme court judgment upholding the Smith Act which targeted US Communists,<sup>662</sup> the Kennedy administration "constantly badgered Bosch about restricting the freedom of Dominican leftists".<sup>663</sup> When Bosch resisted US attempts at making him deploy McCarthyite methods towards the Dominican far left and argued that a "Dominican version of the Smith Act" would be unconstitutional,<sup>664</sup> his democratic credentials did not protect him from accusations of being too soft on Communism.<sup>665</sup> Despite recognizing that a Dominican "crack-down on Communist activities will depend largely upon his being convinced that the Communists represent a direct threat to his administration", a June 1963 State Department assessment of Bosch's policies towards Dominican Communists argued that "Bosch's present tolerance of Communist activities in the Dominican Republic is a dangerous risk".<sup>666</sup> Therefore, the Dominican President's insistence on protecting the civil liberties of everyone regardless of their political orientation "did not meet U.S. expectations of a Cold Warrior".<sup>667</sup>

#### *US Perceptions of Dominican Obstruction*

As I argue, the perception of a target state's obstruction to prior expectations plays a key role in experiencing emotional frustration which in turn led to Johnson's decision in favor of an anti-Bosch intervention. While expectations towards the Dominican Republic remained virtually unchanged in terms of the US preoccupation with conformity to the goals of the Alliance for Progress and against Communist subversion in the country,<sup>668</sup> Bosch's obstruction to US expectations was perceived differently across the Kennedy and Johnson administrations.

---

<sup>662</sup> Douglas argued in his dissenting opinion in the 1951 *Dennis v. United States* case that "[u]nless and until extreme and necessitous circumstances are shown, our aim should be to keep speech unfettered and to allow the processes of law to be invoked only when the provocateurs among us move from speech to action", see [http://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/341/494#writing-USSC\\_CR\\_0341\\_0494\\_ZD1](http://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/341/494#writing-USSC_CR_0341_0494_ZD1). In the drafting of the 1963 Dominican constitution, Douglas acted as a consultative assistance to the Dominican government, see Iber, "'Who Will Impose Democracy?': Sacha Volman and the Contradictions of CIA Support for the Anticommunist Left in Latin America," 1017.

<sup>663</sup> Rabe, "The Caribbean Triangle: Betancourt, Castro, and Trujillo and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1958–1963," 77.

<sup>664</sup> Martin, *Overtaken by Events: The Dominican Crisis from the Fall of Trujillo to the Civil War*, 487.

<sup>665</sup> Alex von Tunzelmann, *Red Heat: Conspiracy, Murder and the Cold War in the Caribbean* (New York: Henry Holt, 2011), 297.

<sup>666</sup> "Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy: President Juan Bosch of the Dominican Republic", June 4, 1963, *DDRS, Document Number CK3100172773*.

<sup>667</sup> Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America*, 98.

<sup>668</sup> That expectations towards the Dominican Republic remained stable does not mean that there was no change in emphasis. As Costigliola notes, the change in presidency from Kennedy to Johnson had the effect that "the Alliance for Progress shifted priorities from development and equality to foreign investment", see Costigliola, "The Foreign Policy of Kennedy and Johnson in the Cold War," 131.

Despite Bosch's continuously obstructive behavior with regard to the implementation of the Alliance for Progress and the inclusive approach in his dealings with Dominican Communists, the Kennedy administration remained generally supportive of him throughout his presidency. Even in the days before Bosch was eventually ousted by a military coup, Ambassador John Martin argued in a secret cable to the US State Department that he continued to believe that "our [US] interests lie in supporting the Bosch Government".<sup>669</sup> True, the administration regarded Bosch's obstructive conduct as disappointing and was "not upset when the [Dominican] military ousted him [Bosch] in September 1963".<sup>670</sup> When the Dominican President asked for US assistance in order to confront rumors of a coup one day before his removal, the Kennedy administration remained inactive, arguing that it could do little to keep Bosch in power.<sup>671</sup> Yet, despite the Kennedy administration's general dissatisfaction with Bosch's presidency, succinctly summarized by then-vice President Lyndon B. Johnson who argued that "Bosch was no Betancourt",<sup>672</sup> Kennedy and his advisors rarely perceived Bosch's behavior as deliberately hostile towards the United States.<sup>673</sup> On the contrary, the general perception within the Kennedy administration was that Bosch had valid reasons for his undesirable and obstructive actions. Trying to understand the Dominican President and his perspective on contested issues, government assessments as to why Bosch resisted the Alliance for Progress and US pressure to restrict Communist activities in his country, were astonishingly benign and understanding. A secret CIA estimate from June 1963 drew attention to the notion that Bosch gave Dominican Communists freedom to return to the island and to organize not because he was a Communist himself or because he tried to upset the US, but rather because he believed "[w]ith reason" that "the principal immediate threat to

---

<sup>669</sup> "Analysis of Juan Bosch's First Six Months as the Elected President of the Dominican Republic", September 22, 1963, *DDRS, Document Number CK3100179286*.

<sup>670</sup> Joseph S. Tulchin, "Promise of Progress: U.S. Relations with Latin America During the Administration of Lyndon B. Johnson," in *Lyndon Johnson Confronts the World: American Foreign Policy, 1963-1968*, ed. Warren I. Cohen and Nancy B. Tucker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 235. See also H.W. Brands, *The Wages of Globalism: Lyndon Johnson and the Limits of American Power* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 50.

<sup>671</sup> Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama*. See also Eric T. Chester, *Rag-Tags, Scum, Riff-Raff, and Commies: The U.S. Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1965-1966* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001), 39. Despite Kennedy's inactivity and refusal to prevent the coup, the US President's first reaction to the coup was "to take a hard line against the Triumvirate [military junta]", see Quinten A. Kelso, "The Dominican Crisis of 1965: A New Appraisal " (Ph.D., University of Colorado at Boulder, 1982), 29.

<sup>672</sup> Lyndon B. Johnson, *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 189. Rómulo Betancourt was President of Venezuela during Kennedy's tenure. As an anti-Communist leader of the democratic left, he was much-respected by the Kennedy administration, see Schmitz, *Thank God They're On Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965*, 244.

<sup>673</sup> An exception is the statement of George Ball, Under Secretary of State, who described Juan Bosch as an "anti-American pedant" after having met with the Dominican President-elect shortly before Bosch took office. See George W. Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs* (New York: Norton, 1982), 327.

the accomplishment of his mission [his presidential agenda] is the constant possibility of a reactionary coup [from the right]".<sup>674</sup> A memorandum for Kennedy's National Security Advisor McGeorge Bundy argued that "by allowing the Communists [...] to organize and operate freely, Bosch is obviously asking for trouble in the future", essentially confirming that Bosch's behavior was highly obstructive to US expectations, but then similarly explained such behavior with recourse to the perception that Bosch regarded "the threat from the right as more dangerous".<sup>675</sup> The perception of key decision-makers within the Kennedy administration that Bosch's obstruction was understandable, perhaps even rational, went even further: assessing Bosch's criticism of the Alliance for Progress, Ambassador John Martin expressed understanding for the Dominican President, arguing that the "need to tie our [US] foreign aid to U.S. procurement", one of the central contentions between the administration and the Dominican government, "works against us politically [...], driving a friend [Bosch] away" and forcing "him to turn to Europe and make his purchases there".<sup>676</sup> In the same document, Martin provided another reason for Bosch's intransigence, arguing that his obstructive behavior and seemingly anti-American attitude could be traced back to domestic political fears and that the fact that "Juan Bosch does not ask us for help" was because of "his fear of the left" and that "it [the Dominican left] will attack him if he goes along with us [the Kennedy administration]".<sup>677</sup>

After Kennedy's assassination had brought Lyndon B. Johnson into power, perceptions of Bosch's behavior and attitude towards the US started to change markedly. What had been considered an undesirable, yet rational stance towards the United States and domestic adversaries during Kennedy's times, was now perceived as much more illegitimate and hostile under Lyndon B. Johnson's rule. Bosch's obstructive behavior remained the same, but interpretations with regard to its assumed sources and motivations became more unfavorable. Living in his Puerto Rican exile after having been ousted by the September 1963 military coup, the ex-Dominican President did not give up his political career, but remained at the helm of the opposition movement against the military-backed Dominican government, "constantly sending instructions and exhortations, both public and private, to his followers" in

---

<sup>674</sup> "President Bosch and Internal Security in the Dominican Republic", CIA Memorandum, June 7, 1963, *DDRS, Document Number CK3100172773*. Another intelligence estimate later concurred by saying that "Bosch reacted vigorously against Communists and Castroists only when he thought they posed direct challenges to his own position". See "Special National Intelligence Estimate", January 17, 1964, *FRUS 1964-1968, XXXII (1), 2*.

<sup>675</sup> "Memorandum for Mr. McGeorge Bundy: President Juan Bosch of the Dominican Republic", June 4, 1963, *DDRS, Document Number CK3100172773*.

<sup>676</sup> "Ambassador Martin to Department of State: Bosch's First Two Months", April 28, 1963, *DDRS, Document Number CK3100379122*.

<sup>677</sup> *Ibid.*



the Dominican Republic, much to the dismay of the Johnson administration.<sup>678</sup> Adding to his prior obstructions, Bosch's political activities from his exile were not only perceived to be detrimental to the bilateral relations between the governments of the two countries, but were also regarded by the US embassy in Santo Domingo as an indication of a hostile stance towards the United States:

My own feeling [Tapley Bennett, US Ambassador] is that Bosch is basically anti-American. This feeling is shared by members of the Embassy who were here during the Bosch period [...]. The pact he has just signed with the violently anti-American Social Christian leadership<sup>679</sup> [...] certainly gives grounds for questioning Bosch's personal orientation".<sup>680</sup>

Strikingly, for the US embassy in Santo Domingo, Bosch's political initiatives in exile were not only attempts at regaining power, but also testimony to his anti-American attitude, supporting "his friends' campaign of defamation against the [United States]" and enabling them to oppose the Dominican government as well as to "jab and kick at Uncle Sam".<sup>681</sup> This view was shared by other US officials. Reaching to the heart of Johnson's circle of advisors, it was Thomas Mann who professed in a telephone conversation with the President that "he did not see that [Bosch] would help [the US] a bit" because, according to Mann, "he [Bosch] is against us, criticizing us, saying we [the US] were supporting the other side".<sup>682</sup> Similarly, when former Ambassador John B. Martin met with Bosch in San Juan in early May, trying to find a negotiated solution to the Dominican impasse, he declared that negotiations were not fruitful because Bosch had "been turning anti-American".<sup>683</sup> An FBI report called the former Dominican President a "controversial figure" not only "characterized as an individual who is motivated by a burning desire to justify himself in the eyes of history", but also "by a boundless hatred for the United States".<sup>684</sup> Thus, key actors within the Johnson administration perceived Bosch's obstructive behavior as indication of Bosch's alleged anti-Americanism,

---

<sup>678</sup> "Letter from the Ambassador to the Dominican Republic (Bennett) to the Assistant Secretary of State of Inter-American Affairs (Mann)", February 2, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (18), 53.

<sup>679</sup> The pact Bennett referred to was a pledge between Bosch's party (PRD) and a faction of the Partido Revolucionario Social Cristiano (PRSC), promising "to act as one, in a common front, in order to secure the re-establishment of the constitutional order in the Dominican Republic", see Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 123.

<sup>680</sup> "Letter from the Ambassador to the Dominican Republic (Bennett) to the Assistant Secretary of State of Inter-American Affairs (Mann)", February 2, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (18), 54.

<sup>681</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>682</sup> "Memorandum of Telephone Conversation, 8:31pm", April 28, 1965, Personal Papers of Thomas C. Mann, Telephone Conversations with LBJ, January 14, 1964 - April 30, 1965, Box 1, *Lyndon B. Johnson Library (LBJL)*.

<sup>683</sup> "Martin's Report on Bosch Follows", May 4, 1965, *National Security File (NSF)*, Country File, *Dominican Republic Vol. 2*, Box 38, *LBJL*.

<sup>684</sup> "Communism in the Dominican Republic", May 5, 1965, *NSF*, Files of Gordon Chase, *Communism in the Dominican Republic Vol. 1*, Box 3, *LBJL*.

significantly departing from how Bosch's obstructions had been perceived when he was in power. Rather than seeing Bosch as a President who could not openly side with the United States because of domestic considerations, a perception widely shared in the Kennedy administration, the Johnson administration perceived Bosch as someone who "was no friend of the United States even though he professed to be".<sup>685</sup> This is all the more surprising, as Bosch himself stayed in US territory during his time in exile and showed no willingness to harm the United States, assuring that his efforts were directed at the military coup government in the Dominican Republic, not at the US government.

#### *Johnson's Emotional Frustration with Bosch*

Lyndon Johnson's decision to prevent the constitutionalist uprising in the Dominican Republic from gaining the upper hand in the violent clashes with the right-wing faction of the Dominican military was considerably influenced by hegemonic expectations towards the country and by how the US President viewed Bosch and his political career. Johnson's perception of Bosch's obstructive behavior as a product of his hatred for the United States led to emotional frustration, prompting Johnson to send US troops to the Dominican republic in order to prevent Bosch's return to power. Had Johnson not reacted emotionally to his perception of Bosch as an anti-American opportunist willing to harm the United States, he would have been unlikely to side with right-wing anti-Bosch forces in the Dominican Republic, which exposed him to considerable domestic criticism in the United States and created a "credibility gap" that came back to haunt Johnson's foreign policy, particularly with regard to the deteriorating situation in Vietnam.<sup>686</sup>

Fearing the "long-term consequences of another Bosch regime",<sup>687</sup> the utmost priority of the US President, from the very onset of the constitutionalist uprising, was to prevent a possible return of the former Dominican President to the country. While the administration took sides in the Dominican struggle between constitutionalists and right-wing loyalists, "vigorously intervening against the constitutionalists from almost the first hours of the revolution [uprising]",<sup>688</sup> what really drove the administration's opposition to the constitutionalists was its hostility towards Juan Bosch. In the first documented telephone conversation dealing with the Dominican crisis on April 26, 1965, two days after the uprising

---

<sup>685</sup> Ibid.

<sup>686</sup> On Johnson's credibility gap, see Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama*, 72.

<sup>687</sup> Alan McPherson, "Latin America," in *A Companion to Lyndon B. Johnson*, ed. Mitchell B. Lerner (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 393.

<sup>688</sup> Slater, *Intervention and Negotiation: The United States and the Dominican Revolution*, 194.

had started, Johnson told Thomas Mann, Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs and one of Johnson's most trusted confidants in the administration, that "this [Juan] Bosch is no good", arguing that even regime change would be a possible means to prevent Bosch from returning to power: "we are going to have to really set up that government down there [in the Dominican Republic], run it and stabilize it some way or another".<sup>689</sup> Despite public assurances to the contrary, Mann agreed with the President, calling Bosch "no good at all" and warning Johnson that with him or "another Bosch, it [the Dominican Republic] is just going to be another sinkhole".<sup>690</sup> On the same day, a CIA staff officer intelligence report confirmed that Bosch's return "to his former position [the presidency] would be highly undesirable".<sup>691</sup>

The administration's fundamental opposition to Bosch's return to the Dominican Republic foreclosed a non-military solution to the conflict. As has been correctly noted, rather than invading the island, the Johnson administration could have "supported Molina Urena [the constitutionalists' provisional President] and/or arranged to bring Bosch back to the country, using "its influence to aid the moderate PRD leadership within the constitutionalist movement".<sup>692</sup> This view was shared by Senator J. William Fulbright, then-chairman of the US senate committee on foreign relations and one of the most vocal critics of Johnson's handling of the Dominican crisis,<sup>693</sup> who in a widely noted speech in September 1965 accused the Johnson administration of having failed to "to take advantage of several opportunities in which it might have changed the course of events".<sup>694</sup> Indeed, Molina Urena and other leading constitutionalists consulted the US embassy in Santo Domingo on April 27, demanding US mediation in the conflict. Their proposal fell on deaf ears. US Ambassador Tapley Bennett declined to help find a negotiated settlement, disingenuously arguing that an

---

<sup>689</sup> "Telephone Conversation Between the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann) and President Johnson", April 26, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (22), 62.

<sup>690</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>691</sup> "The Current Insurrection, Situation Appraisal", April 26, 1965, *NSF, Files of Gordon Chase, Footnoted Text of President Johnson's Speech Vol. 2, Box 4, LBJL*.

<sup>692</sup> Yale H. Ferguson, "The Dominican Intervention of 1965: Recent Interpretations," *International Organization* 27, no. 4 (1973): 527.

<sup>693</sup> On the relationship between Fulbright and Johnson, see Felten, "The Path to Dissent: Johnson, Fulbright, and the 1965 Intervention in the Dominican Republic."

<sup>694</sup> "Statement by Senator J.W. Fulbright", September 15, 1965, *NSF, Country File, Dominican Crisis Chronology*, Box 52, *LBJL*.

agreement should be reached by "Dominicans talking to Dominicans".<sup>695</sup> Shortly after, Bennett recommended the "immediate landing " of US marines.<sup>696</sup>

What was the Johnson administration's vigorous opposition to Bosch's potential return to the Dominican Republic based on and what led eventually to Johnson's decision to interject a high number of US troops into the Dominican power struggle? Convinced that Bosch's behavior was guided by an intense hatred for the United States, the prospect of his imminent return to the Dominican Republic frustrated the US President so much that he quickly decided to engage in a massive regime change operation, the mission of which was to prevent the constitutionalists from bringing the ex-President back to power.<sup>697</sup> As soon as constitutionalist military officers ousted Donald Reid Cabral, Johnson became obsessed with the Dominican Republic, a country he had previously paid little attention to. According to one administration official, his preoccupation with the unfolding Dominican crisis was so pronounced that "he assumed the direction of day-to-day policy and became, in effect, the Dominican desk officer".<sup>698</sup> Johnson would "spend more time on the situation in the Dominican Republic than he would on any other issue, including civil rights and Vietnam" from "late April through June of 1965".<sup>699</sup>

A number of internal administration deliberations provide evidence for Johnson's belief that Bosch's continued obstruction was predicated upon his anti-American tendencies. Explaining his initial sending of four hundred marines to the island on April 28, 1965, President Johnson told his friend Abe Fortas during a telephone conversation that he felt the urge to act after he had received a cable from the US embassy, recommending "armed intervention which would go beyond the mere protection of Americans and seek to establish order in this strife-ridden country [the Dominican Republic]".<sup>700</sup> Fearing that the constitutionalists would prevail in the Dominican civil war, Johnson expressed his mistrust of Bosch and his intentions when he asserted that the former Dominican President was "just a

---

<sup>695</sup> "Telegram from the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Department of State", April 28, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (26), 70.

<sup>696</sup> "Telegram from the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Director of the National Security Agency (Carter)", April 28, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (32), 77.

<sup>697</sup> Between the first day of the constitutionalist uprising and the US intervention, Bosch expressed his desire to return to his country on several occasions, but was not allowed to leave Puerto Rico, see Juan Bosch, "A Tale of Two Nations," *New Leader* 48, no. 13 (1965).

<sup>698</sup> Ball, *The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs*, 329. In an oral history interview, Ball said that Johnson "ran everything himself", see also Paige E. Mulhollan, "Transcript, George Ball Oral History Interview II, LBJ Library," July 9 1971.

<sup>699</sup> Randall B. Woods, "Conflicted Hegemon: LBJ and the Dominican Republic," *Diplomatic History* 32, no. 5 (2008): 755.

<sup>700</sup> "Telegram from the Embassy in the Dominican Republic to the Director of the National Security Agency (Carter)", April 28, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (36), 85.

stooge in the [constitutionalist] deal",<sup>701</sup> willing to do anything that could bring harm to the United States. His advisor Thomas Mann was convinced that Bosch was unwilling and unable to contain anti-American forces if he was to become President again: "we do not think that this fellow Bosch understands the Communist danger [...]. They [Communists] are so much smarter than he is, that before you know it, they'd begin to take over".<sup>702</sup> Bosch's purported inability to contain anti-American forces in the Dominican Republic and his tendency to ignore or even support them was a main factor in Johnson's preference for intervention. In a conversation with Abe Fortas, Johnson proposed that Bosch's promise to call for a cease-fire should be discarded because Bosch had been "moved completely out of the picture" and was "their [the rebels'] captive".<sup>703</sup>

President Johnson's perception of Bosch's conduct led to a state of emotional frustration. Seeing Bosch as an anti-American stooge, a sense of urgency gripped the President. Deeply suspicious of the ex-Dominican President, Johnson became frustrated with the Dominican crisis and "began to panic",<sup>704</sup> feeling that he needed to act swiftly. Anxious about his government's perceived inactivity, Johnson lamented that he had not done enough to stop the constitutionalists from gaining ground:

[t]hey're killing our people and as you [Fortas] say they have captured tanks now; they're taking over the police marching them down the street and they got a hundred of them as hostages [...]. We're doing nothing to them [...]. We've done this now for a week - nothing.<sup>705</sup>

In a conversation with Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara in which Johnson made clear that he wanted to send more marines to the island, he confided that he was "distressed".<sup>706</sup> Dissatisfied with the extent of engagement of other external actors, which added to Johnson's "intense frustration",<sup>707</sup> the President lambasted the OAS, complaining to his friend Mike Mansfield that they were "just phantoms", the "damnedest fraud" he had ever seen, and that

---

<sup>701</sup> "Recording of Telephone Conversation between Lyndon B. Johnson and Abe Fortas", April 28, 1965, 10:20pm, Tape WH6504.06, Citation No. 7373, *Recordings and Transcripts of Conversations and Meetings*, *LBJL*.

<sup>702</sup> "Telephone Conversation Between the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann) and President Johnson", April 27, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (23), 65.

<sup>703</sup> Recording of Telephone Conversation between Lyndon B. Johnson and Abe Fortas", April 30, 1965, 10:50am, Tape WH6504.08, Citation No. 7404, *Recordings and Transcripts of Conversations and Meetings*, *LBJL*.

<sup>704</sup> Woods, "Conflicted Hegemon: LBJ and the Dominican Republic," 758.

<sup>705</sup> Recording of Telephone Conversation between Lyndon B. Johnson and Abe Fortas", April 30, 1965, 10:50am, Tape WH6504.08, Citation No. 7404, *Recordings and Transcripts of Conversations and Meetings*, *LBJL*.

<sup>706</sup> Johnson quoted in Michael R. Beschloss, *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964-1965* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001), 293.

<sup>707</sup> Woods, "Conflicted Hegemon: LBJ and the Dominican Republic," 758.

"international organizations ain't worth a damn except window-dressing".<sup>708</sup> In the same conversation, Johnson admitted that he was "very puzzled and frustrated on what to do in the Dominican Republic".<sup>709</sup> Despite having sent troops to the Dominican Republic and pushing for more and despite an optimistic assessment of his advisors,<sup>710</sup> Johnson felt that his government had "done nothing", which he felt "terrible about".<sup>711</sup> Without the conviction that Bosch's anti-American tendencies prompted him to turn a blind eye towards more radical elements in the constitutionalist movement, Johnson would have probably been less likely to intervene on the side of the anti-Bosch forces and to quickly escalate his military engagement. When Bosch assured that the constitutionalist movement was democratic in nature, Johnson asserted in one of his many conversations with Abe Fortas that Bosch was purposively "misleading the press". Johnson simply did not believe that one could draw a line between the democratic forces within the constitutionalist movement and Dominican Communists.<sup>712</sup> Conversations with skeptical advisors and a telegram in which Juan Bosch himself declared that "the constitutionalist forces are democratic and have complete control of the situation" in the Dominican Republic were to no avail.<sup>713</sup>

### Alternative Explanations

Due to the complexity of the 1965 decision to intervene in the Dominican turmoil, there are a number of different accounts of why the United States used force to manipulate the Dominican authority structure. This section identifies the most common explanations and assesses their empirical accuracy.

The most prominent argument, which is inspired by defensive realism and most closely aligned with the Johnson administration's public justification for the intervention,<sup>714</sup>

---

<sup>708</sup> Recording of Telephone Conversation between Lyndon B. Johnson and Mike Mansfield", April 30, 1965, 11:51am, Tape WH6504.08, Citation No. 7410, *Recordings and Transcripts of Conversations and Meetings, LBJL*.

<sup>709</sup> Ibid.

<sup>710</sup> Recording of Telephone Conversation between Lyndon B. Johnson and George Ball", April 29, 1965, 2:22pm, Tape WH6504.06, Citation No. 7380, *Recordings and Transcripts of Conversations and Meetings, LBJL*.

<sup>711</sup> Johnson quoted in Beschloss, *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964-1965*, 300.

<sup>712</sup> Recording of Telephone Conversation between Lyndon B. Johnson and Abe Fortas", April 30, 1965, 12:17pm, Tape WH6504.08, Citation No. 7413, *Recordings and Transcripts of Conversations and Meetings, LBJL*.

<sup>713</sup> See Juan Bosch to Lyndon B. Johnson, April 29, 1965, *NSF, Country File, Dominican Republic Vol. 2, Box 38, LBJL*.

<sup>714</sup> While the first official reason provided by the US government was the protection of American lives - on April 28, 1965, Johnson declared in a White House press release the intervention was "necessary to give protection to hundreds of Americans who are still in the Dominican Republic and to escort them safely back to [the United States]" - Johnson invoked a different rationale for the invasion shortly thereafter, arguing on April

holds that the April 24 constitutionalist revolt constituted an imminent threat to US national security. In the words of one author, the 1965 intervention was "predicated on a strongly held view that a serious security threat existed", namely "the spread of communism".<sup>715</sup> Arguing that the United States resorted to intervention because "President Johnson and his advisers were terrified of a Communist takeover",<sup>716</sup> the intervention was a defensive means to keep Dominican Communists away from power, as the "American policy towards the Dominican Republic in 1965 [...] was keyed not to opportunity but to threat".<sup>717</sup> Apprehensions about a Communist takeover were, according to this view, predicated upon the assumption that the Dominican constitutionalists, who demanded a return of the ousted President Juan Bosch, were at best subverted by militant Communists or at worst Communists themselves. As preventing "a second Cuba" was the overriding concern, "U.S. officials believed that, no matter the good intentions of some of the rebels, a pro-Bosch victory would increase the likelihood of a Communist takeover".<sup>718</sup> Therefore, the "principal motivation for the US intervention was the fear of the Dominican Republic becoming a 'second Cuba'".<sup>719</sup>

The Communist threat argument seems plausible at first glance. Against the backdrop of intense Cold War competition between the United States and the Soviet Union, it certainly stands to reason to assume that the Johnson administration saw foreign events through the lens of a possible Communist incursion in Latin America. Yet, the empirical evidence lends

---

30 that the US sought to prevent the island from "falling prey to international conspiracy from any quarter", and then on May 2 that the US "will not permit the establishment of another Communist government in the Western Hemisphere". See "Statement by President Johnson, April 28", *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 52, No. 1351, May 17, 1965, 738-739; "Statement by President Johnson, April 30", *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 52, No. 1351, May 17, 1965, 743; "Statement by President Johnson, May 2", *Department of State Bulletin*, Vol. 52, No. 1351, May 17, 1965, 746. For the first justification, see also H.W. Brands, "Decisions on American Armed Intervention: Lebanon, Dominican Republic, and Grenada," *Political Science Quarterly* 102, no. 4 (1987): 615.

<sup>715</sup> Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama*, 1. See also Rabe, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America*, 85.

<sup>716</sup> Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama*, 39.

<sup>717</sup> Abraham F. Lowenthal, "The United States and the Dominican Republic to 1965: Background to Intervention," *Caribbean Studies* 10, no. 2 (1970): 54.

<sup>718</sup> Crandall, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama*, 60.

<sup>719</sup> Fazal, *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation*, 198. See also Saunders, *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions*, 156-164. The argument that Communism posed a national security threat to the United States is based on the notion that a Communist takeover in the Dominican Republic could have been used as missile base and stepping stone for a military attack on the US mainland due to the island's geographic proximity, specially against the background of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. In addition, a victory of Communist forces in the Dominican Republic might have inspired further Communist takeovers in the Caribbean and Latin America, leading to the United States' encirclement by enemy forces. In both scenarios, the security threat argument implicitly assumes that the supposed threat would not stem from the Dominican Republic per se, but rather from the possibility of presenting the Soviet Union with the opportunity of inserting itself in the region and thereby provoking a major military confrontation in the larger framework of the Cold War. See Ferguson, "The Dominican Intervention of 1965: Recent Interpretations," 529, Slater, *Intervention and Negotiation: The United States and the Dominican Revolution*, 197-199.

little support to the argument. Despite Johnson's public assertion that the 1965 intervention was meant to ward off a Communist takeover, discussions within the Johnson administration reveal that evidence for the purported dominance of Communist forces within the rebel ranks was at best scarce. Even before journalists started deflating the list of fifty-three identified Communists and thereby turning it into a major embarrassment for the administration,<sup>720</sup> Johnson's aides warned the US President of exaggerating the Communist threat. When Johnson inquired about the nature of the constitutionalist uprising one day before he decided to send troops, Thomas Mann answered that he did not think that Bosch was a Communist.<sup>721</sup> In discussions about the draft of Johnson's first public announcement on April 28, Johnson's aides convinced the President of omitting any explicit or implicit reference to the supposed Communist threat due to lack of usable evidence.<sup>722</sup> On April 30, some hours before Johnson's second statement, administration officials again advised Johnson against making unsupportable claims about the Communist threat in the Dominican Republic. Johnson's Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, told the President that he should not "point a finger to the Communists' participation in this [the constitutionalist uprising]". Hinting at the lack of evidence about the involvement of Communist third parties, McNamara added: "you [President Johnson] don't know that [Fidel] Castro is trying to do anything".<sup>723</sup> When Johnson asked whether the CIA could document foreign support from the Cuban leader, McNamara simply replied: "I don't think so, Mr. President".<sup>724</sup> Similarly, Johnson's National Security Advisor, McGeorge Bundy, added that "nobody has yet said that anyone of these Communists is actually in command of a column" and argued that he "wasn't sure that these Communists were that much in control of this messy movement [the Dominican uprising]".<sup>725</sup> While Bill Moyers, then-White House press secretary, urged the President not to insist on the Communist threat because he thought such an assertion "would raise the prestige and status of the Cubans"<sup>726</sup> and because it "might drive [the constitutionalists] together",<sup>727</sup> most of Johnson's aides favored omitting references to the supposed Communist subversion of the

---

<sup>720</sup> Theodore Draper, *The Dominican Revolt: A Case Study in American Policy* (New York: Commentary, 1968), 140-141.

<sup>721</sup> Mann quoted in Beschloss, *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964-1965*, 287.

<sup>722</sup> Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention*, 105. See also Alan McPherson, "Misled by Himself: What the Johnson Tapes Reveal About the Dominican intervention of 1965," *Latin American Research Review* 38, no. 2 (2003): 141-144.

<sup>723</sup> "Editorial Note", April 30, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (48), 109.

<sup>724</sup> McNamara quoted in Beschloss, *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964-1965*, 302.

<sup>725</sup> "Editorial Note", April 30, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (48), 111.

<sup>726</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>727</sup> Beschloss, *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964-1965*, 303.



constitutionalists simply because they thought evidence for such a claim was weak. Johnson himself acknowledged in an off-the-record interview with a journalist on April 29, 1965 that "no one on earth knew if this [the Dominican uprising] was a pro-Castro or Communist affair".<sup>728</sup> Therefore, evidence suggests that the Communist threat was deliberately exaggerated in Johnson's public statements. It figured prominently in public justifications not because it reflected genuine apprehension, but rather because Johnson, worried that Congress and public opinion would consider keeping "the Communists from taking over" as the "only basis for action",<sup>729</sup> viewed it as a valuable means to legitimize his intervention. In the words of one author, Johnson "used the gambit of Communist subversion in an attempt to win support in the court of U.S. domestic public opinion".<sup>730</sup> Hence, Johnson chose to commit troops to the Dominican intervention not because of evidence of a Communist threat, but rather in spite of a lack thereof. When the decision to intervene was made in Washington, "the White House – and especially Johnson – disregarded the lack of hard evidence about Communist control over the Dominican situation".<sup>731</sup>

A second, less prominent argument treats Johnson's decision to intervene as a consequence of US concerns with the "fate of US private investments in the Dominican Republic".<sup>732</sup> According to this argument, the Johnson administration was worried about the implications of the revolt and a possible return of Bosch for its trade relations with the island. In the words of Walter LaFeber, the US government cared about "Latin American stability [...] that would be attractive to private investors".<sup>733</sup> Since Bosch's economic policies during

---

<sup>728</sup> Johnson quoted in Michael Grow, *U.S. Presidents and Latin American Interventions: Pursuing Regime Change in the Cold War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008), 85.

<sup>729</sup> Recording of Telephone Conversation between Lyndon B. Johnson and McGeorge Bundy", April 30, 1965, 6:00pm, Tape WH6504.09, Citation No. 7432, *Recordings and Transcripts of Conversations and Meetings, LBJL*. Iber argues convincingly that "the domestic political calculations were obvious when Johnson offered an almost self-refuting argument to the public in early May, announcing that left-wing extremists had taken over the Constitutionalist forces", see Iber, "'Who Will Impose Democracy?': Sacha Volman and the Contradictions of CIA Support for the Anticommunist Left in Latin America," 1023.

<sup>730</sup> Tulchin, "Promise of Progress: U.S. Relations with Latin America During the Administration of Lyndon B. Johnson," 236.

<sup>731</sup> McPherson, "Misled by Himself: What the Johnson Tapes Reveal About the Dominican intervention of 1965," 138. One author correctly notes that Johnson's "anti-Boschism may have been reinforced by their [the US government's] specter of a Communist threat, but it was not dependent on or created by that threat", see Theodore Draper, "The Dominican Intervention Reconsidered," *Political Science Quarterly* 86, no. 1 (1971): 30. Another author shows that "there is considerable evidence that we [the US] feared and opposed [the constitutionalist movement] from the beginning, i.e. before the Communists allegedly took over three days later", see Samuel Shapiro, "The Dominican Dilemma," *New Politics* 5, no. 2 (1965): 66.

<sup>732</sup> Ferguson, "The Dominican Intervention of 1965: Recent Interpretations," 525. See also Fred Goff and Michael Locker, "The Violence of Domination: U.S. Power and the Dominican Republic," in *Latin American Radicalism: A Documentary Report on Left and Nationalist Movements*, ed. Irving Louis Horowitz, Jose De Castro, and John Gerassi (New York: Random House, 1969).

<sup>733</sup> Walter LaFeber, "The Tension Between Democracy and Capitalism During the American Century," *Diplomatic History* 23, no. 2 (1999): 277.

his brief presidency were more protective of domestic labor, creating "a situation wherein sugar workers won the first real improvement in decades",<sup>734</sup> it is argued that prospects for US corporations must have looked bleak if Bosch had returned to power. Having the second-largest US sugar investment in the world in the 1960s, the Dominican Republic was especially important for sugar corporations like South Puerto Rico Sugar, which was the "largest U.S. owner of sugar cane plantations in the world" and got "two-thirds of its sugar from the Dominican Republic".<sup>735</sup> Protecting these industries was a prime concern of the Johnson administration and, according to the argument, eventually prompted the US President to intervene.

The deep US penetration of the Dominican economy is beyond dispute. Nor is it unlikely that the prospect of instability caused by the Dominican crisis of April 1965 was a major concern for US corporations doing business in the country. Whether these concerns extended to the foreign policy circles of the Johnson administration, however, remains highly doubtful. While the US President and his aides were aware of the economic significance of sugar for the Dominican Republic, evidenced by the telephone conversation between Johnson and Mann on April 25, in which Mann explained that the "low sugar price" was "hurting them [the Dominican government under Donald Reid Cabral]",<sup>736</sup> there is no evidence that the decision-making of the administration was influenced by economic interest considerations. What is more, Dominican dependence on the United States as its main trading partner was asymmetric: as one author shows, "[g]iven the world oversupply of sugar, neither the United States nor American companies [were] particularly dependent on Dominican sugar".<sup>737</sup>

The third prevalent argument in the literature treats US regime change in the Dominican Republic as a hegemonic act.<sup>738</sup> Discarding the characterization of the Dominican uprising as a Communist threat to US national security, this view regards the domestic crisis in the Dominican Republic as an opportunity for imperial expansion and domination that the US was quick to seize. Though both the security-threat argument and the hegemonic-control

---

<sup>734</sup> Victor Perlo, *Marines in Santo Domingo!* (New York: New Outlook, 1965), 20.

<sup>735</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-16.

<sup>736</sup> "Telephone Conversation Between the Under Secretary of State for Economic Affairs (Mann) and President Johnson", *FRUS 1964-1968*, XXXII (22), 62.

<sup>737</sup> Ferguson, "The Dominican Intervention of 1965: Recent Interpretations," 526. Another author argues that in "two years of intensive research on the intervention I never once saw or heard mentioned a reference by a United States official to past, existing, or potential threats to American economic interests in the Dominican Republic", see Slater, *Intervention and Negotiation: The United States and the Dominican Revolution*, 46.

<sup>738</sup> James Petras, "Dominican Republic: Revolution and Restoration," *New Left Review* 40 (1966), Shapiro, "The Dominican Dilemma.", Howard J. Wiarda and Michael J. Kryzanek, *The Dominican Republic: A Caribbean Crucible* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992).

argument agree on the notion that the Johnson administration opposed the constitutionalist movement, they assign different motives to this choice which characterized the intervention early on. The US rationale for casting its lot with the loyalist forces around Wessin y Wessin, Benoit and Imbert might have had something to do with the charge that Bosch was too soft on Communism, as Piero Gleijeses readily admits, but the main driving force for intervention was rather, according to the hegemonic-control argument, US opposition to Bosch's quest for sovereign decision-making. As such, Gleijeses explains that

beyond any shadow of doubt, Juan Bosch was a man of the 'democratic left'; therefore, according to the rhetoric of the Alliance for Progress, he should have enjoyed U.S. support. But he was too independent; he bluntly refused U.S. control and 'advice'. This alone would have cost him membership in the 'Democratic left made in USA'.<sup>739</sup>

In a similar account, Richard Barnet argues that US intervention

signified that the political and economic relationships on which the United States preferred to base its dominant influence in the economy and politics of the Dominican Republic had broken down.<sup>740</sup>

The decision to side with the loyalists had less to do with the purported Communist threat, but was rather the consequence of the belief that the US "could control the military and thus guarantee U.S. domination", whereas the "constitutionalists, with their independent, armed civilian cadres, presented a more formidable obstacle to manipulation".<sup>741</sup> Consequently, the purpose of the intervention was to keep a subordinate country ruled by a military junta under US control and to prevent the constitutionalist uprising from returning a formerly ousted President as head of an intransigent government bent on fulfilling its own destiny free from American influence.

Although evidence from Juan Bosch's seven-month tenure suggests that he was unwilling to compromise Dominican sovereignty in his dealings with the United States, the hegemonic-control argument overstates the Johnson administration's appetite for control and domination. True, both Juan Bosch's own writings and US officials' portrayals of his personality indicate that Bosch attached great importance to national sovereignty. Offering a striking glimpse into his self-perception and his role as President compared to his country's past leaders, Bosch wrote in 1964:

[D]ealing with me was no easy matter. I am fully aware of that. I was very sensitive to anything that might affect Dominican sovereignty. My poor country had had, from the first breath of its life as a republic, a string of

---

<sup>739</sup> Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 287.

<sup>740</sup> Barnet, *Intervention and Revolution: The United States in the Third World*.

<sup>741</sup> Goff and Locker, "The Violence of Domination: U.S. Power and the Dominican Republic," 280.

political leaders who had dedicated all their skills and resources to looking for any foreign power on which to unload our independence [...]. I felt wounded, as if it were a personal affront, at the spectacle of so many men without faith in the destiny of their own country [...]. When it fell to me to be leader of a political party and the President of my country, I was very careful always to conduct myself as a Dominican who was proud of his nationality.<sup>742</sup>

Contrary to the hegemonic-control argument, however, US objection to Bosch's quest for independence did not arouse a thirst for domination. When armed fighting between the constitutionalists and loyalists broke out in April 1965, the Johnson administration was anything but enthusiastic about intervening, confounding its alleged hegemonic predisposition. Though US intervention was forceful, the Johnson administration decided to intervene only reluctantly, being anything but quick to seize the opportunity to inject itself into the Dominican power struggle. While the US government closely followed the unfolding events in Santo Domingo from the first day the uprising started, it passed on opportunities to intervene earlier: the first opportunity to intervene came on April 25, one day after the beginning of the uprising, when the US administration turned down two intervention requests, one made by Donald Reid Cabral, the ousted head of the Triumvirate who asked for US help to suppress the uprising, and one by constitutionalists, who "strongly desired U.S. presence as indication [of] 'moral, material guarantee' by U.S. to [the] new government".<sup>743</sup> On April 26, the US embassy in Santo Domingo turned down another intervention request, this time made by the loyalists: "[b]oth Wessin and de los Santos [two loyalist generals] have asked for U.S. troops and we have told them that we have no plans [to] bring in U.S. troops".<sup>744</sup> On April 27, four days into the uprising, Secretary of State Dean Rusk sent a telegram to the American embassy in Santo Domingo, urging the US diplomats on the ground to help establish a "military junta to act as provisional government", but explicitly ordered not to become "involved in details of formation of junta".<sup>745</sup> Even on April 28, the day of the sending of the first marines, the request of the loyalists to receive military assistance was first

---

<sup>742</sup> Juan Bosch, *The Unfinished Experiment: Democracy in the Dominican Republic* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), 162-164. That Bosch, a self-labeled "passionate patriot", was eager to dissociate his presidency from his country's submissive past was an attitude not overlooked by US officials who were dealing with him in 1963. John Bartlow Martin, who was US Ambassador to the Dominican Republic during Bosch's presidency, described Bosch as "extremely sensitive about being dominated by anyone, especially the United States", see Martin, *Overtaken by Events: The Dominican Crisis from the Fall of Trujillo to the Civil War*, 347.

<sup>743</sup> "Incoming Telegram, Department of State", April 25, 1965, *DDRS, Document Number CK3100042287*. See also Center for Strategic Studies, *Dominican Action, 1965: Intervention or Cooperation?*, 16-17, Gleijeses, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention*, 179, Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention*, 70.

<sup>744</sup> "Incoming Telegram, Department of State", April 26, 1965, *DDRS, Document Number CK31000360346*.

<sup>745</sup> "Telegram From the Department of State to the Embassy in the Dominican Republic", April 27, 1965, *FRUS 1964-1968, XXXII* (24), 67.

turned down, as a telegram sent to the State Department by Ambassador Tapley Bennett shows: "Col. Benoit, member of junta, just telephoned embassy to ask that U.S. land 1200 marines 'to help restore peace to this country [Dominican Republic]' [...]. He was given no encouragement".<sup>746</sup> Thus, by the time marines were finally ordered to the island later the same day, a number of opportunities to deploy troops had deliberately been squandered. Had the Johnson administration been as eager to maintain control over the island, as the hegemonic control argument has it, it is not clear by any means why, in the words of Abraham Lowenthal, "American officials let pass a number of possible opportunities to exert their influence directly, choosing instead to abstain from overt involvement".<sup>747</sup> Therefore, documentary evidence lends little support to the hegemonic-control argument.

## **Conclusion**

The 1965 Dominican intervention was a "major episode in world politics, a watershed in inter-American relations".<sup>748</sup> On the surface, this rare case of overt US regime change appears to be a consequence of the Cold War confrontation between the United States and the Soviet Union, with the all too often assumed Communist threat being the main driving force for Johnson's decision to intervene. While acknowledging that the Cold War paradigm inevitably dominated Johnson's thinking, this chapter offers a new interpretation of the Dominican intervention, arguing that the decision-making process leading to the military invasion was marked by high emotional frustration with the former Dominican President Juan Bosch. Had the US President, on the basis of hegemonic expectations, not interpreted Bosch's series of obstructive behavior as a clear sign of his hatred for the United States, the Johnson administration might not have intervened so forcefully, exposing itself to harsh criticism, both domestic and international, and putting the final nail in the coffin of the Alliance for Progress, Kennedy's much-anticipated modernization project for Latin America.

---

<sup>746</sup> "Incoming Telegram, Department of State", April 28, 1965, *DDRS, Document Number CK3100363187*.

<sup>747</sup> Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention*, 155.

<sup>748</sup> Ferguson, "The Dominican Intervention of 1965: Recent Interpretations," 517-518.



## CHAPTER SIX

### The 2003 Invasion of Iraq

The end of the Cold War made the United States the unipole in the international system of states, heralding a new and unprecedented era in international politics, but it had little impact on the US proclivity to intervene militarily in foreign countries. Relations between various US governments and Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime in Iraq testify to the continued persistence of regime change on the menu of US foreign policy options. With the 2003 invasion of Iraq being the poster child of this foreign policy, no other empirical case is as closely associated with the concept and phenomenon of regime change as the US-led overthrow of Saddam Hussein. The Bush administration's clear intent to get rid of Saddam Hussein and his disliked regime makes the 2003 Iraq War the paradigmatic case of regime change. Even semantically, the Iraq case is quintessential, because the term as such originated in debates about US policy towards Saddam Hussein's Iraq in the late 1990s.<sup>749</sup> No serious assessment of US regime change can therefore neglect "the Mother of all Regime Changes".<sup>750</sup>

The US regime change operation in Iraq started on March 19, 2003 when US President George W. Bush gave US CENTCOM commander Tommy Franks the order to execute Operation Iraqi Freedom in the morning hours of that day.<sup>751</sup> Following intense air strikes, US-led coalition ground troops moved swiftly into Iraq and towards Baghdad, the power center of Saddam Hussein's regime. With a ground force numbering 183,000,<sup>752</sup> coalition forces managed to overcome the Iraqi armed forces with little effort, as the "stunning American sweep of Iraq"<sup>753</sup> needed less than a month to terminate Saddam's rule, symbolized by the toppling of his Firdos Square statue in central Baghdad on April 9, 2003.<sup>754</sup> After Bush had proclaimed the end of major combat operations on May 1 as the first phase of the battle to overthrow the Iraqi regime,<sup>755</sup> Iraq remained officially under US occupation for fifteen months until June 28, 2004.<sup>756</sup> Following the de jure termination of

---

<sup>749</sup> Litwak, *Regime Change: U.S. Strategy Through the Prism of 9/11*, xiii.

<sup>750</sup> Reisman, "The Manley O. Hudson Lecture: Why Regime Change Is (Almost Always) a Bad Idea," 519.

<sup>751</sup> Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 379.

<sup>752</sup> *Ibid.*, 401.

<sup>753</sup> David Zucchino, *Thunder Run: The Armored Strike to Capture Baghdad* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2004), xi.

<sup>754</sup> "The Fall of Baghdad", *New York Times*, April 10, 2003.

<sup>755</sup> "Bush Declares 'One Victory in a War on Terror'", *New York Times*, May 2, 2003.

<sup>756</sup> "U.S. Transfers Power to Iraq 2 Days Early", *New York Times*, June 29, 2004.

occupation, a security agreement allowed US troops to remain in the country until December 31, 2011.<sup>757</sup>

Reflecting the controversy it stirred and attention it gained in world politics during the years and months around the invasion in March 2003, regime change in Iraq has figured prominently in public debates and discussions. Many aspects of the invasion have been subject to inquiry, e.g. its ramifications for international law, its role in the flare-up of the Sunni insurgency and the solidification of sectarian fault lines in Iraq, and its geopolitical implications for the wider Middle East. Among these discussions, one aspect has been especially hotly debated: the underlying rationale for the US decision to engage in regime change and overthrow Saddam Hussein. Just as the Bush administration provided changing justifications for its invasion, explanations prevalent in the literature highlight different underlying motives. These range from support for the official justifications provided, i.e. the goal of removing a vital threat to US national security and promoting democracy in Iraq, to more critical accounts stressing the role of the invasion in protecting Israel, promoting US corporate interests and controlling Iraqi oil. Without reaching a consensus more than a decade after the ouster of Saddam Hussein, "the debate over why the United States invaded Iraq has not abated".<sup>758</sup>

This chapter argues that we cannot understand regime change in Iraq without taking into account the emotional frustration experienced by President Bush and many of his foreign policy aides. The terrorist attacks of September 11, their impact on US expectations towards Iraq, and perceptions of Iraqi obstruction as hostile and directed at the United States led to an emotional state that cast its shadow on the decision-making process prior to the 2003 invasion, prompting an administration that came into office with a decidedly restrained foreign policy program, to resort to military aggression in order to get rid of a perceived menace. Saddam Hussein's perceived anti-Americanism sealed the Iraqi dictator's fate, leading to such high levels of emotional frustration within the Bush administration that there was nothing, not even credible disarmament, that Saddam could have done to stay in power. As an aggressive response to frustration, regime change was therefore not a means to serve disarmament or to confront an imminent threat to the security of the United States, but rather the consequence of high emotional frustration within the Bush administration.

The outline of this chapter is as follows. The next section provides a historical overview of the US approach towards Iraq prior to George W. Bush's taking office. Section

---

<sup>757</sup> "Iraqi Premier Cheers End of U.S. Presence", *Washington Post*, January 1, 2012.

<sup>758</sup> Jane K. Cramer and A. Trevor Thrall, *Why Did the United States Invade Iraq?* (London: Routledge, 2012), 1.



Two describes the shift from containment to regime change in the new President's Iraq policy, identifying the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, as a critical turning point. Section Three turns to the main argument of the chapter about the role of emotional frustration, juxtaposing US expectations towards Iraq, Iraqi obstruction, and the US perception thereof in the periods before and after 9/11. Section Four presents and critiques three alternative explanations for US regime change in Iraq, while Section Five briefly concludes.

### **The Prelude: US Policy Towards Iraq Before George W. Bush's Presidency**

With regime change in 2003 being predicated upon previous US dealings with the Iraqi regime – one author correctly notes that "[t]he seeds of the second President Bush's decision to invade [Iraq] were planted by the unfinished nature of the 1991 war" –<sup>759</sup> understanding the overthrow of Saddam Hussein requires taking the immediate history of US-Iraq relations into consideration. Beginning with Saddam's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990, the 1990s saw a deterioration of bilateral relations that used to be famous for collaboration and mutual partnership based on common fears towards the revolutionary regime in Iran. Soon after Saddam Hussein, who became President of Iraq on July 16, 1979,<sup>760</sup> launched military attacks against Iran in September 1980, precipitating an eight-year long war of attrition, the US President Ronald Reagan decided to side with the Iraqi regime in order to prevent an Iranian victory. As a first symbolic step in February 1982, Reagan ordered Iraq's removal from a list of countries that "repeatedly supported acts of international terrorism".<sup>761</sup> In December 1983, Donald Rumsfeld, Reagan's personal representative in the Middle East, traveled to Baghdad to meet with Saddam Hussein in what was the "highest-level contact by any U.S. official with Iraq's leadership in twenty-five years".<sup>762</sup> Another year later, in November 1984, the US restored full diplomatic relations with Saddam Hussein's regime after a break of seventeen years.<sup>763</sup> As Donald Rumsfeld later explained in his memoir, the rationale for the uneasy partnership between the US and the Iraqi leader, whose career Rumsfeld describes as "forged in conflict and hardened by bloodshed",<sup>764</sup> was the perceived existence of convergent national security interests:

---

<sup>759</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (London: Penguin, 2006), 5.

<sup>760</sup> "Bakr Quits in Iraq, Names Hussein", *New York Times*, July 17, 1979.

<sup>761</sup> "The World: In Summary, Readjustments in the Mideast", *New York Times*, February 28, 1982.

<sup>762</sup> Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir*, 4.

<sup>763</sup> "U.S. Restores Full Ties with Iraq But Cites Neutrality in Gulf War", *New York Times*, November 27, 1984.

<sup>764</sup> Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir*, 4.

America could assist Iraq by discouraging other countries from selling arms to Iran, and Iraq could assist America by holding the line against an ascendant radical Islamist and terrorist-supporting regime in Iran.<sup>765</sup>

In the words David Newton, who became the first US ambassador to Iraq after the restoration of diplomatic relations in 1984, the tilt towards Iraq was justified, as the US was "concerned that Iraq should not lose the war with Iran, because that would have threatened Saudi Arabia and the Gulf".<sup>766</sup>

The end of the Iran-Iraq War removed the threat of a possible expansion of Iranian influence in the region, but it had little impact on the US stance towards the Iraqi regime. George H.W. Bush, who in January 1989, a few months after the end of the conflict, had become US President, continued friendly relations with Saddam Hussein in the framework of what has been called a "policy of constructive engagement".<sup>767</sup> Just like his presidential predecessor, Bush rejected repeated calls from Congress to impose economic sanctions on Iraq for its biological and chemical weapons program and the use of chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq War culminating in the infamous Halabja chemical attack on March 16, 1988.<sup>768</sup> Arguing that sanctions would be ineffective in convincing Saddam Hussein to abandon his weapons program and would instead harm the United States' economic posture in the region,<sup>769</sup> the preferred "policy of constructive engagement" offered political and economic incentives to the Iraqi regime as a means to moderate Saddam Hussein's aggressive foreign policy. National Security Directive No. 26, issued on October 2, 1989, defined a conciliatory US approach towards Iraq based on "normal relations", "opportunities for U.S. firms to participate in the reconstruction of the Iraqi economy", and "sales of non-lethal forms of military assistance".<sup>770</sup>

While bilateral relations between Iraq and the US remained friendly in the immediate aftermath of the Iran-Iraq War, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the following 1991 Gulf War signaled a marked shift in Bush's approach towards Iraq. On April 3, 1991, UN Resolution 687 reaffirmed the continuation of prewar sanctions which had demanded the withdrawal of

---

<sup>765</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>766</sup> David Newton quoted in "U.S. Had Key Role in Iraq Buildup", *Washington Post*, December 30, 2002.

<sup>767</sup> Zachary Karabell, "Backfire: US Policy Toward Iraq, 1988-2 August 1990," *Middle East Journal* 49, no. 1 (1995).

<sup>768</sup> "Poison Gas: Iraq's Crime," *New York Times*, March 26 1988.

<sup>769</sup> For debates between Congress and the Reagan and Bush administration, see "A Sharp Divergence Over Sanctions for Iraq", *Washington Post*, September 15, 1988; "U.S. to Support Punishing Nations That Use Poison Gas", *Washington Post*, January 4, 1989; "Bush Aide Opposes Sanctions on Iraq", *New York Times*, June 16, 1990.

<sup>770</sup> "National Security Directive 26: U.S. Policy Toward the Persian Gulf", October 2, 1989, *George Bush Presidential Library and Museum*, <http://bushlibrary.tamu.edu/research/pdfs/nsd/nsd26.pdf>, accessed on April 24, 2013.

Saddam Hussein's troops from Kuwait, and established the UN Special Commission (UNSCOM) to oversee and enforce Iraqi disarmament.<sup>771</sup> The American approach towards Iraq switched from prewar engagement to a postwar policy of comprehensive containment, consisting of four central elements: UN-imposed sanctions and the UNSCOM inspections regime, complemented by a permanent US military presence in the Persian Gulf and two no-fly zones in Northern and Southern Iraq prohibiting any activity by Iraqi aircraft.<sup>772</sup> President George H.W. Bush seemed to understand the consequences of having left the Iraqi regime intact, writing in his diary on the day he called a ceasefire that what was missing from the Gulf War was Saddam Hussein's unconditional surrender to "make this [the 1991 Gulf War] akin to WWII, to separate Kuwait from Korea and Vietnam".<sup>773</sup> In remarks on the establishment of the no-fly zone in Northern Iraq seven weeks later, the US President specified his sentiments by declaring that "there will not be normalized relations with the United States [...] until Saddam Hussein is out of there [Iraq]" and that the "most important thing" would be "to get Saddam out of there",<sup>774</sup> implying at the declaratory level that sanctions would not be lifted even if the Iraqi regime complied with provisions mandated by UN Resolution 687, while containment remained the actual policy in practice.

Despite later public statements to the contrary, containment remained the official US approach towards Iraq under Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush's successor. Clinton emphasized Iraq's obligation to comply with its disarmament obligations on a number of occasions in 1993 without linking a potential end to economic sanctions to Saddam Hussein's overthrow. In March 1993, Secretary of State Warren Christopher declared that the US was trying to "depersonalize" US-Iraq relations, implying that sanctions were not related to Saddam Hussein's remaining in power.<sup>775</sup> President Clinton himself had stated in January 1993 that he was seeking a change in Iraqi behavior and did not regard the Iraqi President as

---

<sup>771</sup> "United Nations Security Council Resolution 687 (1991)", <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/596/23/IMG/NR059623.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed on April 25, 2013.

<sup>772</sup> Kenneth Pollack, *The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq* (New York: Random House, 2002), xxv-xxvi. Operation Provide Comfort began on April 6, 1991 and established a no-fly zone in the Kurdish area of Northern Iraq, whereas Operation Southern Watch began on August 27, 1991 to protect Shia Muslims in Southern Iraq. Although not mentioned in the text of the resolution, both operations made reference to UN resolution 688, adopted on April 5, 1991. See "United Nations Security Council Resolution 688 (1991)", <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/596/24/IMG/NR059624.pdf?OpenElement>, accessed on April 25, 2013.

<sup>773</sup> "Bush Says He Hoped Saddam Would Flee Iraq", *Washington Post*, September 2, 1998.

<sup>774</sup> "George Bush: Remarks on Assistance for Iraqi Refugees and a News Conference", April 16, 1991, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsba.edu/ws/?pid=19479>, accessed on April 26, 2013.

<sup>775</sup> "U.S. and Britain Softening Emphasis on Ousting Iraqi", *New York Times*, March 30, 1993.

an irredeemable foe.<sup>776</sup> Growing increasingly frustrated with the sanctions regime and Iraq's intransigence in dealing with UN inspections, the Clinton administration tilted more and more towards calling for Saddam's removal, but only in public statements, not in practice. While on March 26, 1997, Secretary of States Madeleine Albright gave a speech on US policy towards Iraq in which she asserted that "evidence is overwhelming that Saddam Hussein's intentions will never be peaceful",<sup>777</sup> indicating that fulfilling UN obligations would not be enough to redeem the Iraqi regime,<sup>778</sup> little changed in the US approach towards Iraq.

Changes at the declaratory level were so far-reaching that regime change in Iraq became official US policy in 1998. After months of public pressure on Bill Clinton to choose a tougher stance towards Iraq, Congress passed the Iraq Liberation Act in October 1998, which declared under section three that

[i]t should be the policy of the United States to support efforts to remove the regime headed by Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq and to promote the emergence of a democratic government to replace that regime.<sup>779</sup>

President Clinton signed the bill into law on October 31, stating that the "United States looks forward to a democratically supported regime that would permit us to enter into a dialogue leading to the reintegration of Iraq into normal international life",<sup>780</sup> but little change in terms of actual policy. To be sure the majority of targets during Operation Desert Fox, a four-day air campaign in December 1998 comprised of the "biggest U.S. military strikes in Iraq since the end of the 1991 war",<sup>781</sup> were key elements of Saddam Hussein's domestic power base such as command-and-control facilities. While Bill Clinton claimed that the goal of Operation Desert Fox was to "degrade Saddam's capacity to develop and deliver weapons of mass destruction [WMD]"<sup>782</sup>, only eleven of the ninety-seven air strike targets were WMD facilities.<sup>783</sup> This notwithstanding, there were no signs that the Clinton administration would

---

<sup>776</sup> "The New Presidency: Clinton Backs Raid but Muses About a New Start", *New York Times*, January 14, 1993.

<sup>777</sup> "Secstate Albright Policy Speech on Iraq", March 26, 1997, *Federation of American Scientists*, <http://www.fas.org/news/iraq/1997/03/bmd970327b.htm>, accessed on April 26, 2013.

<sup>778</sup> Richard Butler, *The Greatest Threat: Iraq, Weapons of Mass Destruction, and the Crisis of Global Security* (New York: Public Affairs, 2000), 49.

<sup>779</sup> "H.R.4655: Iraq Liberation Act of 1998", *105<sup>th</sup> Congress (1997-1998)*, <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/D?c105:4:./temp/~c105lgwnHT:>, accessed on April 27, 2013.

<sup>780</sup> "William J. Clinton: Statement on Signing the Iraq Liberation Act of 1998", October 31, 1998, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=55205>, accessed on April 27, 2013.

<sup>781</sup> Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, 19.

<sup>782</sup> "William J. Clinton: The President's Radio Address", December 19, 1998. *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=55434>, accessed on April 27, 2013.

<sup>783</sup> Pollack, *The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq*, 93.

use extensive force to overthrow the Iraqi time.<sup>784</sup> Most importantly, there were no considerations of using ground forces to invade Iraq. Rather than tilting towards military intervention, the political cost of the US-British air campaign against Iraq was a fundamentally divided UN Security Council with France and Russia growing increasingly weary of the UN sanctions regime. As economic sanctions crumbled and more and more countries seemed willing to do business with Iraq, the years of 1999 and 2000 saw a gradual increase in Iraqi prestige and economic power.<sup>785</sup> Faced with these challenges, the Clinton administration did not make a determined effort to implement its official policy of regime change, even showing willingness to lift economic sanctions if Saddam cooperated in his disarmament tasks mandated by the new UN Resolution 1284.<sup>786</sup>

## US Policy Towards Iraq under George W. Bush

### *Containment Before 9/11*

From today's perspective, it seems plausible to assume that the US stance towards Iraq shifted significantly with the inauguration of George W. Bush. Against the backdrop of what has been described the "bevy of neo-conservative advisers and officials who streamed into government" and "the strong streak of American ultra-nationalism in a number of key appointments",<sup>787</sup> one is tempted to make such assumption. Indeed, many argue that "President Bush and top officials of his administration were determined from early 2001 to bring about regime change in Iraq".<sup>788</sup> In reality however, remarkably little changed in US-

---

<sup>784</sup> As two authors show, Clinton "paid lip service to the goal of ousting Saddam but did little to make it happen, and he was certainly not considering using the U.S. military to drive the Iraqi dictator from power, see John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007), 244.

<sup>785</sup> Charles Duelfer, *Hide and Seek: The Search for Truth in Iraq* (New York: Public Affairs, 2009), 170-177.

<sup>786</sup> Apart from establishing the UN Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC), a new inspections regime substituting UNSCOM after its breakdown in the course of crumbling sanctions, the resolution expressed "its intention [...] to suspend [...] for a period of 120 days renewable by the Council [...] prohibitions against the import of commodities and products originating in Iraq [...]". See "United Nations Security Council Resolution 1284 (1999)", December 17, 1999, <http://www.un.org/Depts/unscom/Keyresolutions/sres99-1284.htm>, accessed on April 28, 2013.

<sup>787</sup> Ali A. Allawi, *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 4.

<sup>788</sup> Chaim Kaufmann, "Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War," *International Security* 29, no. 1 (2004): 5. See also Ron Suskind, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 85-86. One author argues that regime change had already in the 1990s become the solution to the "Saddam problem", see Russell A. Burgos, "Origins of Regime Change: 'Ideapolitik' on the Long Road to Baghdad, 1993-2000," *Security Studies* 17, no. 2 (2008). Note that there is some controversy in the literature regarding the question of whether the Bush administration was bent on regime change even before 9/11. For a pessimistic view, seconding this chapter's understanding that the Bush administration gave no indication in January 2001 that "it was prepared to commit to a substantially more aggressive policy to change the status quo [the policy of containment]", see Andrew Flisbert, "The Road to Baghdad: Ideas and Intellectuals in Explanations of the Iraq War," *Security Studies* 15, no. 2 (2006): 315.

Iraq relations with the start of George W. Bush's presidency in January 2001. In the first months of his term, President Bush did not regard foreign policy issues as his top priority and seemed to be reluctant to adopt a major change in Iraq policy towards regime change.<sup>789</sup> Before the September 11 attacks, the George W. Bush administration's policy vis-à-vis Iraq was in fact a continuation of Bill Clinton's policy of containment, the 1998 Iraq Liberation Act notwithstanding. In March 2001, Bush maintained that US policy towards Iraq would "continue to be containment of Saddam".<sup>790</sup> The regime change invasion that was to take place two years later was far beyond the most offensive policy preferences voiced in internal administration discussions during a policy review at the beginning of Bush's term.<sup>791</sup> If anything, the Bush administration tilted away from, not towards regime change.

In the administration's policy review, the main question was not regime change, but rather how the sanctions and inspections regime could be modified in order to counter Saddam Hussein's gradual economic and political rehabilitation after a decade of sanctions. In fact, because Vice President Dick Cheney, later to be one of the staunchest proponent of regime change in Iraq, argued in a March 2001 interview that he did not think the administration should hinge its policy "just to the question of whether or not the inspectors go back in there [into Iraq]" and that inspections "may not be as crucial if you've got other measures in place and you've got a sanctions regime", many saw the administration's policy review as evidence that the US was "backing down in the face of Iraqi intransigence".<sup>792</sup> Skepticism towards the level of toughness with which the administration appeared to confront Iraq was in fact so high among conservative lawmakers who accused the administration of being too soft on Iraq, that it prompted Secretary of State Colin Powell to defend the administration in a committee hearing, arguing that sanction reform was not an "effort to ease

---

<sup>789</sup> For how Bush focused on domestic issues in the first months of his presidency, see Melvyn P. Leffler, "The Foreign Policies of the George W. Bush Administration: Memoirs, History, Legacy," *Diplomatic History* 37, no. 2 (2013): 192. Karl Rove, Bush's close confidant, confirms the early focus on domestic policy initiatives, see Karl Rove, *Courage and Consequence: My Life as a Conservative in the Fight* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010), 229-230.

<sup>790</sup> Bush quoted in "Bush Rejects Claims of Softened Iraq Policy", *Washington Times*, March 10, 2001.

<sup>791</sup> In August 2001, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul D. Wolfowitz put forward a strategy called the "enclave strategy" which urged the deployment of American troops to Iraq to seize oil fields whose control would then be handed over to Iraqi opposition groups. As offensive as this strategy was, it did not involve a direct confrontation between US troops and Saddam Hussein's regime. See Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 13-22. Already in 1999, before coming into power, Wolfowitz urged the US to "be prepared to commit ground forces to protect a sanctuary in southern Iraq where the opposition could safely mobilize", see Stephen J. Solarz and Paul Wolfowitz, "Letters to the Editor: How to Overthrow Saddam," *Foreign Affairs* 78, no. 2 (1999): 160.

<sup>792</sup> Cheney quoted in Bill Sammon, "Cheney Softens Demand for Iraqi Inspections: Baghdad weapons program no longer held 'crucial'," *Washington Times*, March 5, 2001.

the sanctions", but rather to "rescue the sanctions policy that was collapsing".<sup>793</sup> In sum, the Bush administration chose to tweak Clinton's containment approach instead of turning to regime change in the first months after coming into power, exposing itself to accusations that it was too soft on Iraq.

### *The Turn to Regime Change After 9/11*

In the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, the internal power balance shifted considerably towards the proponents of regime change, leaving the voices of containment advocates unheard. President Bush announced on September 20, 2001, that the "war on terror begins with al Qaeda, but it does not end there. It will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped and defeated".<sup>794</sup> That the defeat of "terrorist groups" would involve a confrontation with Saddam Hussein became more and more clear in the months following 9/11. Even before Bush's 2002 State of the Union Address in January 2002, in which he asserted that Iraq co-constituted "an axis of evil, arming to threaten the peace of the world"<sup>795</sup>, did administration officials call for turning to Saddam Hussein as the next target in the "war on terror". At first, these considerations proposed the limited use of force to overthrow Saddam Hussein short of a full-scale invasion. In a discussion with President Bush on September 15, 2001, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz reiterated the "enclave strategy" to seize Iraqi oil fields in Southern Iraq and provide a sanctuary for Shiites hostile to the Iraqi regime.<sup>796</sup> Soon later, however, key administration officials became convinced that the limited use of force would not bring about regime change. When on January 3, 2002 Vice President Dick Cheney and his chief of staff Scooter Libby met with CIA Director George Tenet and two of his aides to discuss CIA operations inside Iraq, one of Tenet's aides emphasized that "covert action could accomplish a good deal, but it could not, by itself, oust Saddam".<sup>797</sup> This meant that an invasion with ground troops would be necessary to change the Iraqi regime. Planning for contingencies, the administration had started updating its war plans with Iraq immediately after the terrorist attacks of September 11, but these plans

---

<sup>793</sup> Powell quoted in Senate Foreign Relations Committee, *Testimony at Budget Hearing, March 8* (2001 [cited April 9, 2014]); available from <http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/1164.htm>.

<sup>794</sup> "George W. Bush: Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People", Washington, D.C., <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2001/09/20010920-8.html>, accessed on April 30, 2013.

<sup>795</sup> "George W. Bush: Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the State of the Union", January 29, 2002, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29644>, accessed on May 1, 2013.

<sup>796</sup> Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (New York: Pantheon, 2006), 16.

<sup>797</sup> Dick Cheney and Liz Cheney, *In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir* (New York: Threshold Editions, 2011), 371, Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 72-74.

seemed to become more and more concrete. Countless meetings between Secretary of Defense and US CENTCOM commander Tommy Franks, in which the war plan was constantly updated, took place between November 2001 and the end of 2002.<sup>798</sup>

Regime change became reality with the invasion of Iraq on March 19, 2003. When President Bush addressed the nation in the evening of that day, announcing "the early stages of military operations",<sup>799</sup> the ultimatum of 48 hours for Saddam Hussein and his sons to leave Baghdad had passed.<sup>800</sup> Military action was initiated with missile strikes that unsuccessfully aimed at decapitating the Iraqi President whom the Bush administration suspected to be at a complex outside Baghdad.<sup>801</sup> Already on the first full day of war, on March 20, the United States military gained control of 25 percent of Iraqi territory with a force of roughly 250,000 military personnel involved in the overall operation.<sup>802</sup> The invasion proceeded without much resistance from the Iraqi military so that fears of potential contingencies such as Iraqi use of WMD against advancing coalition forces, missile attacks on Israel, oil fields set to fire, widespread starvation, a public health crisis, or the so-called "Fortress Baghdad", "a long and bloody standoff [...] in the urban environment",<sup>803</sup> did not materialize.<sup>804</sup> After the fall of Tikrit on April 14, which was the last major battle,<sup>805</sup> Bush announced the end of major combat operations on May 1, 2003, less than a month after the onset of the invasion.<sup>806</sup> The Bush administration promised to withdraw its troops from Iraq once the Iraqi dictatorship was dismantled and Iraq set on a path of peace and security. The occupation of Iraq lasted until June 28, 2004, but US troops remained in the country until the end of 2011 with the last American troops leaving Iraq on December 18, 2011.<sup>807</sup>

---

<sup>798</sup> Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir*, 425, 437-439.

<sup>799</sup> "George W. Bush: Address to the Nation on Iraq", March 19, 2003, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=63368&st=iraq&st1=>, accessed on May 2, 2013.

<sup>800</sup> On March 17, 2003, Bush announced that a refusal on the part of "Saddam Hussein and his sons" to leave the country would "result in military conflict, commenced at a time of our choosing". See "George W. Bush: Address to the Nation on Iraq", March 17, 2003, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=63713&st=iraq&st1=#>, accessed on May 2, 2013.

<sup>801</sup> Bush, *Decision Points* 254.

<sup>802</sup> Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 401.

<sup>803</sup> Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir*, 430.

<sup>804</sup> Bush, *Decision Points* 257-258.

<sup>805</sup> "End of 'Major' Combat, Fall of Tikrit, Anxiety over Syria", *New York Times*, April 15, 2003.

<sup>806</sup> "George W. Bush: Address to the Nation on Iraq from the U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln", May 1, 2003, *The American Presidency Project*, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=68675&st=iraq&st1=>, accessed on May 2, 2013.

<sup>807</sup> "Last Convoy of American Troops Leave Iraq", *New York Times*, December 19, 2011.



## **Bush's Emotional Frustration and US Regime Change in Iraq**

Why was there a shift in the George W. Bush administration's foreign policy towards Iraq from containment to regime change after the first months of Bush's presidency? Taking advantage of the analytical leverage provided by the terrorist attacks of September 11 as a critical turning point in the administration's approach towards Iraq, the section separately examines the administration's general foreign policy outlook and its specific expectations towards Iraq's leadership, continuity in Iraqi obstruction and the Bush administration's perception thereof, and the level of emotional frustration within the administration, both before and after September 11, 2001.

### *Bush's Expectations Towards Iraq Before 9/11*

What explains the Bush administration's initial choice for containment in the face of growing Iraqi intransigence? Despite daily obstructions in the shape of resistance to the enforcement of no-fly zones, a central component of containment, the Bush administration did not resort to regime change. Instead, it responded by striking Iraqi targets and by trying to strengthen the containment policy that had been put in place a decade earlier. This choice for limited missile strikes had something to do with Bush's initial foreign policy outlook. In one of his earliest speeches on foreign policy and the United States' role in the world, Bush made, as presidential candidate, a careful distinction between international engagement and international dominance. Worried about an overstretch of the US military, he argued that "American internationalism should not mean action without vision, activity without priority, and missions without end – an approach that squanders American will and drains American energy".<sup>808</sup> Without questioning that "American armed forces have an irreplaceable role in the world", he noted in another speech that Americans could not be "permanent peacekeepers, dividing warring parties".<sup>809</sup> The intended recalibration of US missions abroad was in line with Bush's conception of America's place in the world. Reaffirming America's predominant global role as the most powerful state internationally, Bush did not fail to stress that

America cherishes freedom, but we do not own it. We value the elegant structures of our own democracy – but realize that, in other societies, the architecture will vary. We propose our principles, we must not impose our culture.<sup>810</sup>

---

<sup>808</sup> George W. Bush, *A Distinctly American Internationalism*, November 19 (1999 [cited April 10, 2014]; available from <http://www.fas.org/news/usa/1999/11/991119-bush-foreignpolicy.htm>).

<sup>809</sup> George W. Bush, *A Period of Consequences*, September 23 (1999 [cited April 10, 2014]; available from [http://www3.citadel.edu/pao/addresses/pres\\_bush.html](http://www3.citadel.edu/pao/addresses/pres_bush.html)).

<sup>810</sup> Bush, *A Distinctly American Internationalism*, November 19 ([cited]).

In one of three presidential election debates in October 2000, Bush reinforced his view that the central responsibility stemming from the United States' immense power was to project a humble picture of the US to the world, arguing that "if we're an arrogant nation they'll view us that way, but if we're a humble nation they'll respect us".<sup>811</sup> A good example for the extent to which Bush put a premium on staying out of the affairs of other states unless core national interests were concerned, was his stance towards the peace process in the Middle East, about which he said: "[w]e can't dictate the terms of peace [...]" and "[i]t's got to be on the timetable of the people that we're trying to bring to the peace table".<sup>812</sup>

At the time of his statements on foreign policy during the 2000 presidential campaign, Bush had no prior executive experience at the federal level and was widely seen as a foreign policy novice.<sup>813</sup> While his relative inexperience might have had an impact on the stability and reliability of his foreign policy outlook, the latter was widely shared with and reinforced by some of his most important foreign policy advisers. Condoleezza Rice, who became Bush's first National Security Advisor, formulated her outlook in an article in 2000 that contained what has been called "Bush's guide to the world" before 9/11.<sup>814</sup> In it, Rice argued that a strong US military tasked with the defense of the US homeland should not imply a foreign policy of arrogance, but rather the pursuit of US interests "without hectoring and bluster".<sup>815</sup> More importantly, the article testifies to Rice's embrace of the principle of sovereign equality. Criticizing the Clinton administration's over-reliance on the military for purposes other than self-defense, Rice explained that "[u]sing the American armed forces as the world's '911' will [...] fuel concern among other great powers that the United States has decided to enforce notions of 'limited sovereignty'".<sup>816</sup> In the article, Rice stressed her respect for the sovereignty and autonomous decision-making of other states is reflected in statements about bilateral relations with China and Russia, in which she recognized limits to US power and the notion that "it is simply not possible to ignore and isolate other powerful states that do not share [American] values."<sup>817</sup> Based on an outlook that emphasized US restraint in the

---

<sup>811</sup> George W. Bush, *The Second Gore-Bush Presidential Debate, October 11* (2000 [cited April 10, 2014]); available from <http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-11-2000-debate-transcript>.

<sup>812</sup> George W. Bush, *The Third Gore-Bush Presidential Debate, October 17* (2000 [cited April 11, 2014]); available from <http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-17-2000-debate-transcript>.

<sup>813</sup> On Bush's perceived lack of familiarity with national security and foreign policy, see "Mr. Bush's Foreign Policy," *New York Times*, November 20 1999, Eric Schmitt, "A Cadre of Familiar Foreign Policy Experts Is Putting Its Imprint on Bush," *New York Times*, December 23, 1999.

<sup>814</sup> George Packer, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2005), 37.

<sup>815</sup> Condoleezza Rice, "Promoting the National Interest," *Foreign Affairs* 79, no. 1 (2000): 62.

<sup>816</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>817</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

dealings with other states, the US President was predisposed to a cautious foreign policy without hegemonic expectations towards Iraq prior to 9/11.

### *Iraqi Obstruction Before 9/11*

The Bush administration's initial preference for containment must be judged against the backdrop of Iraqi foreign policy behavior and is all the more remarkable given that Saddam Hussein's conduct was hardly restrained. Crumbling economic sanctions reinvigorated the Iraqi economy and the years of 1999 and 2000 saw a gradual increase in Iraqi prestige and economic power.<sup>818</sup> More importantly, Iraq grew more assertive vis-à-vis the United States. In 1999, the Iraqi regime started resisting the enforcement of the no-fly zones in Northern and Southern Iraq, regularly targeting US and British aircraft and making a deadly shoot-down increasingly more likely.<sup>819</sup> As Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld put it, Iraq became "the one place on the face of the earth where American men and women in uniform [were] getting fired at with impunity, day after day after day".<sup>820</sup> According to reports, Iraq shot 51 times at British and American pilots patrolling the no-fly zones from the beginning of January through mid-February 2001 and more in January 2001 alone than in the entire previous year.<sup>821</sup> Clearly, the regular Iraqi firings of anti-aircraft artillery constituted an obstruction to the enforcement of no-fly zones and were perceived accordingly by the Bush administration. On February 16, 2001, George W. Bush responded to the growing danger of Iraqi shootings by authorizing strikes against Iraqi anti-aircraft facilities beyond the no-fly zones for the first time in two years.<sup>822</sup> But as remarkable as these strikes were, they were limited and part of the enforcement of no-fly zones. The Bush administration's response to an Iraqi regime growing more assertive vis-à-vis the United States, did thus not go beyond the containment policy put in place by Bush's presidential predecessors. In the words of National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, the focus of the administration "was not [...] on the

---

<sup>818</sup> Duelfer, *Hide and Seek: The Search for Truth in Iraq*, 170-177.

<sup>819</sup> Pollack, *The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq*, xxvii. See also Cheney and Cheney, *In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir*, 366.

<sup>820</sup> Rumsfeld quoted in House of Representatives, *Hearing Before the Committee on Armed Services: United States Policy Toward Iraq, September 18* (2002 [cited April 9, 2014]; available from [http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/security/has261000.000/has261000\\_of.htm](http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/security/has261000.000/has261000_of.htm)).

<sup>821</sup> James Dao, "Provocation Cited: Bush Approves Attacks Beyond 'No Fly' Zone - First in 2 Years," *New York Times*, February 17 2001, Michael R. Gordon, "A Decade Beyond the Gulf War: New Bush, Old Team, Ponder the Saddam Hussein Problem " *New York Times* February 18 2001.

<sup>822</sup> Bush, *Decision Points* 225.

overthrow of Saddam Hussein", but rather were the administration's efforts "aimed at trying to strengthen the containment regime".<sup>823</sup>

### *The Bush Administration's Perception of Iraqi Obstruction Before 9/11*

Based on the foreign policy outlook of sovereign equality, the Bush administration did not perceive Saddam Hussein's obstructive behavior as deliberately directed at the US, something highly unexpected, or rooted in hatred. Instead, administration officials perceived the Iraqi regime's growing assertiveness and the regular targeting of US aircraft enforcing the no-fly zones as a type of obstructive behavior that remained within the framework of normal politics, failing to instigate an emotional response. With the low-level combat over the no-fly zones continuing, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld laid out a number of potential foreign policy options vis-à-vis Iraq in a memorandum sent to Condoleezza Rice on July 27, 2001. Proposing a National Security Council (NSC) meeting to discuss the administration's Iraq policy, Rumsfeld revealed his characterization of Saddam Hussein by trying to put himself into the shoes of the Iraqi dictator, arguing that "[h]e [Saddam Hussein] has his own interests" and that "he might prefer [...] to make some accommodation".<sup>824</sup> Rumsfeld's view that Saddam had "his own interests" indicates that at least parts of the Bush administration regarded Iraqi intransigence as a normal and therefore predictable act of foreign policy in a world in which states naturally pursue their interests.<sup>825</sup> To be sure, the Bush administration considered Iraqi foreign policy behavior a serious menace that needed to be confronted. This menace, however, was not one that took the administration by surprise, nor was it considered out of the ordinary or an expression of deep hatred.

Another indication for the perception of Iraqi obstruction as an act of normal politics was the Bush administration's characterization of its response to Iraqi shootings. When President Bush authorized US bombings of Iraqi targets outside the no-fly zones, something that had not happened in two years, he insisted publicly that these were routine operations rather than a sign of departure from previous US policy. On the day of the attacks, when journalists confronted Bush with the bombings in an unrelated press conference, the US

---

<sup>823</sup> Condoleezza Rice, *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2011), 29.

<sup>824</sup> Rumsfeld quoted in Donald Rumsfeld, *Rumsfeld to Rice et al.: Iraq, July 27 (2001* [cited April 13, 2014]; available from <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/293/2001-07-27%20To%20Condoleezza%20Rice%20re%20Iraq.pdf>. See also Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir*, 419-421.

<sup>825</sup> Note that, according to Douglas Feith, Rumsfeld's Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, accommodation with Saddam was not the preferred option of the Secretary of Defense, but rather a "bad idea" that people needed to think through in order to be able to reject it affirmatively. See Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 212.

President tried to avoid giving the impression that something unusual was happening, repeating twice that a "routine mission was conducted to enforce the no-fly zone" and that he did not make the decision himself, but rather authorized a decision made by the "commanders on the ground".<sup>826</sup> When the US bombed Iraqi targets months later in what was the "strongest attack on Iraq since February [2001]",<sup>827</sup> Bush reiterated that attacks were a routine operation initiated by the military on its own, stressing that the "[US] military can make decisions as they see fit to protect our pilots".<sup>828</sup>

### *No Regime Change*

The continuation of containment, the de-facto US policy towards Iraq up until the terrorist attacks of September 11, was the result of a long weighing of different options. Almost immediately after George W. Bush came into office in January 2001, an extensive policy review on Iraq took place,<sup>829</sup> but while the overthrow of Saddam Hussein as a possible US aim was certainly discussed, at no time did any administration official propose a massive ground invasion of the kind that took place in March 2003 after 9/11.<sup>830</sup> Assigning duties to his cabinet – reviewing the sanctions regime, examining military options, and improving intelligence on Iraq – at the first NSC meeting of his presidency on January 30, 2001,<sup>831</sup> Bush insisted that a range of different options be considered, something that became unimaginable after 9/11. The following months were marked by an intense internal debate about how best to deal with the Iraqi regime. Rather than taking a decision without much deliberation, the policy review allowed NSC members to present and defend their preferred policy approaches to Iraq. The deliberations proved to be so extensive that "[a]s of late summer 2001, neither Rumsfeld nor the President had decided on what U.S. policy toward Iraq should be".<sup>832</sup> Mostly at the deputies committee level, the cabinet's second tier, administration officials considered options to confront Iraq's regular targeting of US aircraft. The State Department

---

<sup>826</sup> George W. Bush, *The President's News Conference with President Vicente Fox of Mexico in San Cristobal, Mexico, February 16* (2001 [cited April 14, 2014]; available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=45868&st=&st1=>.

<sup>827</sup> Jane Perlez, "Allies Bomb Iraqi Air Defenses in Biggest Attack in 6 Months," *New York Times*, August 11, 2001.

<sup>828</sup> Julian Borger and Richard Norton-Taylor, "Allies Hit Hard at Saddam's Air Defence Sites," *Guardian*, August 11, 2001.

<sup>829</sup> Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 13.

<sup>830</sup> As perhaps the most outspoken advocate of Saddam Hussein's overthrow, Paul Wolfowitz favored financial and military support for Iraqi opposition groups. See Suskind, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill*, 82-86, 96. According to Condoleezza Rice, "the use of U.S. military force to overthrow the [Iraqi] regime was not [...] even mentioned in our first NSC meeting or in subsequent ones in 2001". See Rice, *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington*, 33.

<sup>831</sup> Suskind, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill*, 75.

<sup>832</sup> Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 212.

suggested an overhaul of the sanctions regime with a more specific list of items Iraq would be disallowed to purchase; the Department of Defense and the Vice President's office favored a more aggressive approach to Iraq that would center on the support of Iraqi opposition groups.<sup>833</sup> Despite the Iraqi regime's unabated intransigence in its dealings with the United States, the discussions dragged on for months. The time devoted to the formulation of a comprehensive policy towards Iraq meant that before the President and his top advisers left for vacation in August 2001, no "policy recommendation on Iraq" had been "forwarded to the president",<sup>834</sup> which meant that the Bush administration's approach to Iraq remained within the framework of containment, however perceivedly ill-suited to confront Iraq.<sup>835</sup>

### *Bush's Hegemonic Expectations Towards Iraq After 9/11*

The terrorist attacks of September 11 changed the way George W. Bush and other officials of his administration viewed the United States' role in the world and its relationship to other states. According to CIA Director George Tenet, after 9/11 "[m]any foreign policy issues were [...] viewed through the prism of smoke rising from the World Trade Center and the Pentagon".<sup>836</sup> In the words of Bush himself, "[t]hrough the lens of 9/11, my view changed".<sup>837</sup> The pre-9/11 outlook, taking the sovereign equality of states for granted, changed into one that emphasized the United States' predominant role in dealings with other states. Weighing the respect for sovereign equality against a new urge to restructure relations to other states on the basis of US predominance, key decision-makers in the Bush administration started rethinking the United States' role in the world in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. While states were regarded as sovereign equals up until the terrorist attacks, now the outlook divided states into enemies and friends. In the evening of September 11, Bush asserted that his government would "make no distinction between the terrorists who committed these [terrorist] acts and those who harbor them",<sup>838</sup> essentially declaring "a sweeping new doctrine in American security".<sup>839</sup> A few days later in a speech before Congress on September 20,

---

<sup>833</sup> Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 21-23.

<sup>834</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>835</sup> According to National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, "the patchwork of measures to enforce the armistice terms of 1991 [after the Gulf War] had frayed badly", an indication that the administration was not satisfied with how containment played out in Iraq. See Rice, *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington*, 33.

<sup>836</sup> George Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA* (New York: Harper Collins, 2007), 305.

<sup>837</sup> Bush, *Decision Points* 229.

<sup>838</sup> "Address to the Nation on the Terrorist Attacks", September 11, 2001, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=58057&st=&st1=>.

<sup>839</sup> Peter Baker, *Days of Fire: Bush and Cheney in the White House* (New York: Random House, 2013), 131. Explicating the rationale of the statement, Condoleezza Rice, Bush's National Security Advisor, confirms that "that line became known as one of the most important elements of the 'Bush Doctrine'", see Rice, *No Higher*

2001, the US President stated that "[e]very nation, in every region, now has a decision to make: [e]ither you are with us, or you are with the terrorists."<sup>840</sup>

A memo produced by Douglas Feith, the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, testified to this change in view and US expectations towards Iraq. Tasked by Donald Rumsfeld with developing an analysis of the United States' role in a post-9/11 world,<sup>841</sup> Feith formulated a new foreign policy outlook whose rationale and logic explicated much of what has come to be known the Bush Doctrine, i.e. the notion that "new and vigorous policies, most notably preventive war",<sup>842</sup> were necessary to confront great threats. In his memo titled "sovereignty and anticipatory self-defense", Feith articulated the administration's new perspective on the significance and nature of sovereignty in international relations. While the administration's pre-9/11 outlook emphasized a lack of intention to impose limited sovereignty on states the United States dealt with, the new foreign policy outlook made a dramatic departure from what Feith called "the traditional view of sovereignty", i.e. the notion that states "have the sovereign right to do whatever they want within their own borders".<sup>843</sup> Now, after 9/11, the Bush administration claimed residual rights in its dealings with specific target states, rights that would elevate its position vis-à-vis other states, allow it to confront behavior it deemed hostile and to quit according "full respect to the sovereignty of a hostile power".<sup>844</sup> With the new doctrine, the US adopted hegemonic expectations and would now be in a position to rightfully expect compliance with its expectations. With respect to Iraq, this meant a new urge to demand disarmament from Saddam Hussein.

### *Iraqi Obstruction After 9/11*

The Bush administration's move from containment to regime change after 9/11 was not preceded by a change in Iraqi behavior. Just as prior the terrorist attacks, Saddam Hussein remained defiant in his foreign policy after the attacks, but did not expand his obstructive actions. Just like before 9/11, Iraqi attempts at shooting down US aircraft patrolling the no-fly

---

*Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington*, 77. Bush himself admits that his new doctrine "overturned the approach of the past, which treated terrorist groups as distinct from their sponsors " and forced "nations to choose whether they would fight the terrorists or share in their fate", see Bush, *Decision Points* 137.

<sup>840</sup> George W. Bush, *Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11* (2001 [cited April 15, 2014]); available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=64731&st=saddam&st1=iraq>.

<sup>841</sup> Rumsfeld, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir*, 423.

<sup>842</sup> Robert Jervis, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine," *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 3 (2003): 365. Jervis argues that the Bush administration's labeling of preventive wars as preemptive, implying that a target state's attack on the US would be imminent, does "violence to the English language" (369).

<sup>843</sup> Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Policy, *Sovereignty and Anticipatory Self-Defense*, August 24 (2002 [cited April 15, 2014]); available from <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/294/2002-08-24%20From%20OSD%20Policy%20re%20Sovereignty%20and%20Anticipatory%20Self-Defense.pdf>.

<sup>844</sup> Ibid.

zones occurred regularly. According to Richard Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Iraq was still engaged in low-level combat with US planes at the time of his testimony in September 2002.<sup>845</sup> While Iraqi shootings decreased in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, possibly because Saddam Hussein "wanted to avoid provoking the United States", the month of April 2002 experienced the most intense skirmishes since August 2001.<sup>846</sup> In addition, Iraq's intention to pursue a program of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) remained unchanged after 9/11, at least in the eyes of the Bush administration. However false the belief of US intelligence and foreign intelligence agencies about the extent of Iraq's WMD program was, it was based on evidence collected almost exclusively before 9/11. The national intelligence estimate (NIE) on the status and prospects of Iraqi WMD, which was collaboratively produced by the entire American intelligence community and delivered to Congress in early October 2002, was based on an array of analyses and estimates that had already been previously produced by various US intelligence agencies.<sup>847</sup>

#### *The Bush Administration's Perception of Iraqi Obstruction After 9/11*

Despite the unchanged nature of Iraqi obstruction, the Bush administration's perception of Iraq's foreign policy behavior changed markedly after the terrorist attacks of 9/11. In contrast to how Iraqi obstruction was perceived in the beginning of Bush's presidential term, US administration officials now took Iraqi intransigence as a sign of deep hostility towards the United States, considering Saddam Hussein's behavior as a clear indication of his staunch anti-Americanism.<sup>848</sup> The expectation of compliance with the administration's disarmament demands led many government officials, including the President himself, to be surprised by Saddam Hussein's unabatedly obstructive behavior. Proceeding from the assumption that his expectations towards Iraq were clearly communicated, Bush did not expect the Iraqi dictator to remain unwilling to knuckle under US pressure to disarm. The US President reasoned: "[i]f Saddam doesn't actually have WMD [...], why on earth would he subject himself to a war he will almost certainly lose?".<sup>849</sup> In a later interview, Bush revealed that "he was surprised to

---

<sup>845</sup> Representatives, *Hearing Before the Committee on Armed Services: United States Policy Toward Iraq, September 18* (cited).

<sup>846</sup> James Dao, "U.S. Says Iraq Moved Missiles to No-Fly Zone," *New York Times*, April 23, 2002. Towards the end of 2002, the US intensified its bombing of Iraqi targets, responding to increased Iraqi attempts at targeting US aircraft. Richard Norton-Taylor, "Britain and US Step up Bombing in Iraq," *Guardian*, December 4 2002.

<sup>847</sup> Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA*, 322.

<sup>848</sup> Note that I challenge the widespread notion established in the literature that already from the moment of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait "Saddam was seen as implacably aggressive". See, for example, Duelfer and Dyson, "Chronic Misperception and International Conflict: The U.S.-Iraq Experience," 96.

<sup>849</sup> Bush, *Decision Points* 242.



learn Saddam Hussein did not believe he would take military action in 2003".<sup>850</sup> Indeed, expected compliance with US demands of disarmament were so strong that it did not occur to the US President and his aides that Saddam Hussein's perceived obstruction had little to do with the United States.

In addition to being surprised by the Iraqi dictator's perceived unwillingness to disarm, the Bush administration was convinced that Iraq's alleged WMD program was a sign of Saddam Hussein's intention to hurt the United States. Calling the Iraqi leader "a homicidal dictator pursuing WMD and supporting terror at the heart of the Middle East",<sup>851</sup> Bush saw in Saddam Hussein a high degree of Iraqi hostility and a "sworn hatred of America".<sup>852</sup> Interpreting Iraqi obstruction as "evidence of dangerous malignity" towards the US,<sup>853</sup> Bush shared his views on Saddam Hussein's alleged hatred for the United States in September 2002:

this man [Saddam Hussein] poses a much graver threat than anybody could have possibly imagined. Other countries, of course, bear the same risk. But there's no doubt his hatred is mainly directed at us [the United States]. There's no doubt he can't stand us.<sup>854</sup>

Similarly, when the US President set an ultimatum for Saddam's departure from Iraq in March 2003, he argued that the Iraqi regime not only had "a history of reckless aggression in the Middle East", but also "a deep hatred for America and our friends".<sup>855</sup> Bush made similar remarks in private, adding further credence to the sincerity of how he perceived Iraqi obstruction after 9/11: in a closed-door meeting with members of Congress, Bush, using cruder language, argued that Saddam's foreign policy towards the United States was nothing but a "Fuck the United States!",<sup>856</sup> revealing the extent of Saddam's alleged anti-Americanism Bush sensed. This perception and deep mistrust of Saddam Hussein's stance towards the United States was a likely cause, not consequence, of Bush's genuine belief in Iraqi WMD, the official justification for regime change. Had Bush not perceived the Iraqi dictator as an anti-American villain willing to use anything at his disposal to hurt the United States, the US President might have drawn more cautious conclusions about Iraq's alleged WMD and might

---

<sup>850</sup> "Bush Surprised Saddam Didn't Believe Attack Ultimatum", *CBS News*, November 7, 2014, <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/bush-surprised-saddam-didnt-believe-attack-ultimatum/>

<sup>851</sup> Bush, *Decision Points* 267.

<sup>852</sup> *Ibid.*, 253.

<sup>853</sup> Duelfer and Dyson, "Chronic Misperception and International Conflict: The U.S.-Iraq Experience," 74.

<sup>854</sup> "Remarks by the President at John Cornyn for Senate Reception", Houston, Texas, September 26, 2002, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/09/20020926-17.html>.

<sup>855</sup> George W. Bush, *Address to the Nation on Iraq, March 17* (2003 [cited May 2, 2013]); available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=63713&st=iraq&st1=#>.

<sup>856</sup> Bush quoted in Michael Isikoff and David Corn, *Hubris: The Inside Story of Spin, Scandal, and the Selling of the Iraq War* (New York: Crown, 2006), 117.

not have regarded "any ambiguity concerning Iraqi WMD [as] evidence of their existence and Saddam's commitment to conceal capabilities".<sup>857</sup>

Bush's perception that Saddam's obstructive behavior, i.e. his assumed WMD program and the continued targeting of US aircraft, could be traced back to the Iraqi dictator's allegedly implacable hostility towards the United States, left no room for alternative views on the sources of Saddam Hussein's behavior. That Iraqi obstruction could have been an outgrowth of other factors was hardly considered. The times when the administration meticulously analyzed Saddam's behavior in order to reach a better understanding of the mercurial Iraqi dictator and his opaque regime were long gone. Instead, evidence that pointed towards other reasons for Iraq's obstruction was largely ignored and never seriously considered in the aftermath of 9/11. Interestingly, Saddam Hussein was in reality "much more interested in the threat from Iran than the threat from the United States".<sup>858</sup> It did not occur to the Bush administration that his obstructive behavior was informed by what captured records of internal Iraqi deliberations suggest to be an unwillingness to signal "weakness that might encourage an Iranian or Israeli attack".<sup>859</sup> Preoccupied with his regional adversaries rather than driven by a desire to attack the United States, Saddam was convinced that he "needed to withhold cooperation from UN inspectors to prevent Iraq's enemies from collecting intelligence and to preserve Iraq's honor and dignity".<sup>860</sup> As interviews with the Iraqi dictator after his capture show, Saddam's ambiguity about a potential WMD program was a consequence of his belief that "Iraq could not appear weak to its enemies, especially Iran", that he regarded the "possibility of Iran trying to annex a portion of Southern Iraq" as the "most significant threat facing Iraq", and that Saddam was "more concerned about Iran discovering Iraq's weaknesses and vulnerabilities".<sup>861</sup> Indeed, then-CIA Director George Tenet admits in his memoir that the administration failed to consider the possibility that the reason why Saddam Hussein did not admit to the absence of Iraqi WMD was unrelated to the United States, but rather a consequence of regional security concerns on the part of the Iraqi dictator.<sup>862</sup> David Lake is therefore correct in arguing that the Bush administration ruled out

---

<sup>857</sup> Duelfer and Dyson, "Chronic Misperception and International Conflict: The U.S.-Iraq Experience," 98.

<sup>858</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>859</sup> Kevin M. Woods, David D. Palkki, and Mark E. Stout, *The Saddam Tapes: The Inner Workings of a Tyrant's Regime, 1978–2001* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 256.

<sup>860</sup> Ibid., 326.

<sup>861</sup> "Saddam Hussein Talks to the FBI", Casual Conversation, June 11, 2004, *National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 279*, <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB279/index.htm>. See also Harvey, *Explaining the Iraq War: Counterfactual Theory, Logic and Evidence*, 250.

<sup>862</sup> Tenet, *At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA*, 332-333.

the possibility that Saddam's continued obstruction after 9/11 "might be directed at his domestic and regional opponents rather than at Washington".<sup>863</sup>

### *Bush's Emotional Frustration with Saddam Hussein*

The emotional state of US administration officials in the aftermath of 9/11 cast its shadow on the administration's decision-making process in foreign policy. While it has been widely argued that the terrorist attacks of September 11 changed the administration's threat perception,<sup>864</sup> their direct emotional impact on the US President and his government officials should not be underestimated.<sup>865</sup> The anxiety-inducing character of the attacks had considerable impact not only on ordinary Americans, but also on the highest echelons of US power. In an atmosphere in which "[e]motions were raw",<sup>866</sup> the US President himself experienced "this terrible new reality [9/11] as directly and emotionally as any American".<sup>867</sup> While fear and what Condoleezza Rice called "a virtual state of shock" might have dominated with other government officials,<sup>868</sup> the President himself experienced high levels of anger. Not only was Bush outraged by the attacks and the audacity of their perpetrators to launch deadly attacks on American soil, he also vowed that "[t]hey [the perpetrators] were going to pay" when the news of the second plane hitting the World Trade Center in New York City was delivered to him.<sup>869</sup> When he then learned that a third plane had crashed into the Pentagon, his outrage and quest for revenge intensified:

[t]he first plane could have been an accident. The second was definitely an attack. The third was a declaration of war. My blood was boiling. We were going to find out who did this, and kick their ass.<sup>870</sup>

Bush's anger had immediate consequences for the actions the US President envisioned to take in response to the attacks. In an interview he gave later, he claimed to remember exactly what

---

<sup>863</sup> Lake, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," 30.

<sup>864</sup> Dueck, "Neoclassical Realism and the National Interest: Presidents, Domestic Politics, and Major Military Interventions," 165, Litwak, *Outlier States: American Strategies to Change, Contain, or Engage Regimes*, 103, David Mitchell and Tansa George Massoud, "Anatomy of Failure: Bush's Decision-Making Process and the Iraq War," *Foreign Policy Analysis* 5, no. 3 (2009): 279, Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 27. Bush himself argued in March 2003 that "[i]t used to be that we [the US] could think that you could contain a person like Saddam Hussein, that oceans would protect us from his type of terror", but that "September the 11th should say to the American people that we're now a battlefield, that weapons of mass destruction in the hands of a terrorist organization could be deployed here at home". See "The President's News Conference", March 6, 2003, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=119&st=&st1=>.

<sup>865</sup> Michael Hirsh argues that "[i]n its emotional impact, September 11, 2001, may have been the most horrifying single day in American history", see Michael Hirsh, "Bush and the World," *Foreign Affairs* (2002): 18.

<sup>866</sup> Leffler, "The Foreign Policies of the George W. Bush Administration: Memoirs, History, Legacy," 194.

<sup>867</sup> Hirsh, "Bush and the World," 18.

<sup>868</sup> Rice, *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington*, 82.

<sup>869</sup> Bush, *Decision Points* 127.

<sup>870</sup> *Ibid.*, 128. A few days after the attacks, Bush told Karl Rove that he felt "overwhelming anger", see Rove, *Courage and Consequence: My Life as a Conservative in the Fight*, 277.

he was thinking at the moment the news reached him: "I made up my mind at that moment that we were going to war".<sup>871</sup> Reflecting upon the lack of urgency he felt regarding the threat emanating from Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden prior to September 11, a threat that upon Bush's inauguration had been identified by CIA Director George Tenet as "one of the three top threats facing the United States",<sup>872</sup> Bush tellingly justified his pre-9/11 inaction by saying that his "blood was not nearly as boiling".<sup>873</sup> Now, Bush's outrage propelled him to a type of action that was consciously chosen to be different from previous ways US governments had responded to terrorist attacks: in the words of the President himself, his military response would be more comprehensive than "pinprick cruise missile strike[s]" that would not do more than put "a million-dollar missile on a five-dollar tent".<sup>874</sup>

As Bush's outrage and anger translated into military action in Afghanistan and the toppling of the Taliban, his emotional arousal persisted, evolving into frustration with what would become the second target in Bush's "war on terror": Iraq. Based on the widespread perception within the administration that Saddam Hussein's obstruction was an outgrowth of his inexcusable hatred for the United States, Bush became emotionally frustrated with the Iraqi leader. Prior to 9/11, Iraq's obstructionism was a serious foreign policy problem to Bush. After 9/11, with a radical shift in US expectations in the shape of the Bush Doctrine combined with a much less favorable view of the sources of Iraqi foreign policy behavior, the same obstructionism, now turning into a top US foreign policy priority, aroused deep frustration. While somewhat guarded from public view and carefully cloaked into the language of imminent security threats and necessary self-defense against terrorism, a language that would resonate both with a wounded post-9/11 American public and the international normative context with respect to the utility and permissibility of the use of military force, this emotional frustration became palpable in Bush's private interactions and deliberations within his administration. At a time when Bush publicly professed not to have any Iraq war plans on his desk,<sup>875</sup> he privately told his press secretary Ari Fleischer in an outburst standing in stark contrast to the language the administration used publicly: "I'm going to kick his [Saddam's] sorry motherfucking ass all over the Mideast".<sup>876</sup> Such visceral

---

<sup>871</sup> Bob Woodward, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002), 13.

<sup>872</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>873</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>874</sup> Bush, *Decision Points* 135.

<sup>875</sup> In two different news conferences in April and May 2002, Bush assured that he had no intention to strike Iraq, see Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 120, 129.

<sup>876</sup> Bush, May 2002, quoted in Isikoff and Corn, *Hubris: The Inside Story of Spin, Scandal, and the Selling of the Iraq War*, 3.

reactions testifying to Bush's frustration with Saddam remained mostly invisible to the eye of the American and international public, but they were numerous. During a discussion with US senators in March 2002 about how to deal with Iraq, Bush "waved his hand dismissively [...] and neatly summed up his Iraq policy" by saying "Fuck Saddam, we're taking him out".<sup>877</sup> Having "strong feelings about Saddam Hussein",<sup>878</sup> Bush did not try to hide his frustration in private settings. Only in rare occasions did he reveal his determination to overthrow Saddam Hussein, like in April 2002 when he caused considerable irritation in front of journalists, signaling that "even Iraqi compliance with UN demands on weapons inspections might not be enough to avoid war": "I made up my mind that Saddam needs to go".<sup>879</sup>

President Bush's emotional frustration with Saddam Hussein was so intense that there was no conceivable option left to the Iraqi dictator to stay in power. No commitment to disarmament, which according to the publicly stated justification for the 2003 invasion of Iraq was the official goal of regime change, could have been credible enough to ameliorate Bush's feelings of frustration and to avoid war. In the words of James Mann,

[a]dministration officials viewed the two goals of disarmament and regime change as inseparable because they assumed Saddam Hussein would never give up the programs for weapons of mass destruction they were convinced he possessed.<sup>880</sup>

The Bush administration's belief in Iraqi hostility and feelings of deep frustration with Saddam Hussein rendered any combination of Iraqi concessions short of relinquishing power unacceptable, making any outcome of the inspections regime mandated by UNSC Resolution 1441 other than military action impossible. In the course of UN weapons inspections, White House press secretary Ari Fleischer laid out why there was close to nothing Saddam could do to convince the United States of his commitment to disarmament. On December 2, 2002, he said that "[i]f Saddam Hussein indicates that he has weapons of mass destruction [...], then we will know that Saddam Hussein again deceived the world"; "[i]f he declares he has none, then we will know that Saddam Hussein is once again misleading the world",<sup>881</sup> revealing how deeply entrenched the belief in Iraqi hostility and its concomitant existence of WMD stockpiles was. Hence, it was "Washington, not Baghdad, that kicked weapons inspectors out

---

<sup>877</sup> Michael Elliott and James Carney, "First Stop, Iraq," *Time*, March 31, 2003.

<sup>878</sup> Daniel Eisenberg, "We're Taking Him Out," *Time*, May 5, 2002.

<sup>879</sup> Bush quoted in "Bush: We Will Get Rid of Saddam," *Guardian*, April 6, 2002.

<sup>880</sup> James Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet* (New York: Viking, 2004), 348.

<sup>881</sup> Ari Fleischer, *George Bush: Press Briefing by Ari Fleischer, December 2 (2002* [cited May 29, 2013]; available from <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=47457>. Bob Woodward suggests that Vice President Dick Cheney saw the requirement of an Iraqi WMD declaration thirty days after the passing of UNSC resolution 1441 "more or less as a trap for Saddam". See Woodward, *Plan of Attack*, 222.

of Iraq, advising them to leave three days before the invasion".<sup>882</sup> Actions on the part of the Iraqi regime, be it concessions or continued intransigence, would not be used to update prior perceptions about Iraqi hostility, but would instead be judged in light of those firm post-9/11 perceptions.<sup>883</sup> The decision-making process after 9/11 differed starkly from the decision to pursue a policy of containment before 9/11. The belief that Iraq was intentionally trying to harm the United States was not based on intelligence, whether faulty or not, but was an outgrowth of the administration's negative perceptions and hegemonic expectations resulting in emotional frustration.

### **Alternative Explanations**

As already mentioned, explanations for the 2003 Iraq War and Bush's decision to overthrow Saddam Hussein abound. According to one author, "there are few instances that match the invasion and occupation of Iraq for complexity of motive and ambiguity of purpose".<sup>884</sup> This section presents three common arguments and assesses their explanatory power.

The most prominent argument about the sources of regime change in Iraq is the notion that Saddam Hussein's WMD program posed an imminent threat to the national security of the United States. Believing that the Iraqi dictator would not shy away from using any violent means in furthering his aims, the Bush administration was, according to this argument, apprehensive of the Iraqi regime's attempts at developing WMD. In the words of Melvyn Leffler, the goal of regime change was thus "to enhance the nation's [US] security and rid the world of a defiant and portentous foe rather than promote democracy or remake the Middle East".<sup>885</sup> The security-threat argument is closely aligned with the Bush administration's public pre-invasion justifications for regime change,<sup>886</sup> given that Iraq's WMD program occupied a central place in the administration's official presentation of the case for regime change. As one author correctly notes, "the most urgent rationale for war, and the strongest rebuttal to those critics who argued that Iraq could be contained" was the argument that "the United States could not afford to wait to strike Iraq because Saddam possessed horribly destructive

---

<sup>882</sup> Paul R. Pillar, *Intelligence and U.S. Foreign Policy: Iraq, 9/11, and Misguided Reform* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 39.

<sup>883</sup> As Todd Purdum puts it, "[f]or Bush, trusting Saddam's goodwill was never an option". See Todd Purdum, *A Time of Our Choosing: America's War in Iraq* (New York: Times Books, 2003), 256.

<sup>884</sup> Allawi, *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace*, 1.

<sup>885</sup> Leffler, "The Foreign Policies of the George W. Bush Administration: Memoirs, History, Legacy," 213.

<sup>886</sup> Note that post-invasion justifications shifted markedly to another much-invoked rationale, namely the promotion of democracy and the liberation of the Iraqi people, see Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 477.

weapons and might get more".<sup>887</sup> In his address to the UN General Assembly in September 2002, President Bush asserted that the "conduct of the Iraqi regime is a threat to the authority of the United Nations, and a threat to peace", arguing that "Saddam Hussein has defied all these efforts [previous UN resolutions] and continues to develop weapons of mass destruction". Based on these assertions, Bush concluded that "[i]n one place – in one regime – we find all these dangers, in their most lethal and aggressive forms".<sup>888</sup>

The argument that fear regarding Saddam Hussein's WMD program was the most critical driving force for regime change is belied by the evidence at hand. First, a number of government officials have admitted that WMD were not the main reason for the invasion. True, the widespread accusation that the Bush administration willfully lied about Iraqi WMD is hard to sustain. There are plausible reasons for the administration's belief that Saddam possessed such weapons. His prior use of chemical weapons during the Iran-Iraq War, his uncooperative stance towards weapons inspections following the 1991 Gulf War, and his decision in 1998 to ban UN inspectors from Iraq, all gave the administration ample reason to believe that the Iraqi dictator was trying everything to conceal the real extent of his WMD program. As Leffler shows, "[e]ven the harsh critics of the war [...] acknowledge that they, too, believed that Saddam possessed WMD (of some sort) or would develop them as soon as he successfully evaded sanctions and inspections".<sup>889</sup> Whether this genuine belief in Saddam Hussein's WMD program was the main reason for regime change, however, is far from certain. Evidence suggests that rather than being the administration's main preoccupation, WMD were a convenient argument to justify regime change and garner domestic public and international support. Paul Wolfowitz, Bush's Deputy Secretary of Defense, for example conceded in a post-invasion interview that "for reasons that have a lot to do with the U.S. government bureaucracy [the administration] settled on the one issue that everyone could agree on which was weapons of mass destruction as the core reason".<sup>890</sup> Douglas Feith, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, similarly hints at the notion that the WMD threat was a means to publicly justify regime change, discounting the importance of corresponding intelligence details for the administration's decision for regime change: "the rationale for the war [2003 invasion of Iraq] didn't hinge on the details of [the WMD] intelligence even

---

<sup>887</sup> Purdum, *A Time of Our Choosing: America's War in Iraq*, 258.

<sup>888</sup> "Statement by President Bush, United Nations General Assembly", General Debate 57<sup>th</sup> Session, September 12, 2002, <http://www.un.org/webcast/ga/57/statements/020912usaE.htm>, accessed on May 23, 2013.

<sup>889</sup> Leffler, "The Foreign Policies of the George W. Bush Administration: Memoirs, History, Legacy," 202.

<sup>890</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz Interview with Sam Tannenhaus, Vanity Fair*, May 9 (2003 [cited May 15, 2014]); available from <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2594>.

though the details of the intelligence at times became elements of the public presentation [for regime change]".<sup>891</sup> Richard Haass, the State Department's Director of Policy Planning, agrees by arguing that the "arguments put forward for going to war - noncompliance with U.N. resolutions, possession of weapons of mass destruction - turned out to be essentially window-dressing, trotted out to build domestic and international support".<sup>892</sup>

An alternative version of the security-threat argument claims that not Iraqi WMD per se, but rather Saddam Hussein's willingness to hand such weapons to terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda was the main source of threat to US security. This concern was regularly invoked when Bush administration officials presented the case against Iraq to the public. In the words of the US President, "the source of our urgent concern about Saddam Hussein's links to international terrorist groups" was the notion that, for a chemical or biological attack, "all that might be required are a small container and one terrorist or Iraqi intelligence operative to deliver it". More specifically, Bush asserted that the US knew not only that "Iraq and the al Qaeda terrorist network share a common enemy – the United States of America", but also that they had "high-level contacts that go back a decade", giving Saddam Hussein the strategic option to "decide on any given day to provide a biological or chemical weapon to a terrorist group or individual terrorists".<sup>893</sup> In his 2003 State of the Union Address, Bush similarly claimed that the Iraqi regime had ties to terrorists:

Evidence from intelligence sources, secret communications, and statements by people now in custody reveal that Saddam Hussein aids and protects terrorists, including members of Al Qaida. Secretly and without fingerprints, he could provide one of his hidden weapons to terrorists or help them develop their own.<sup>894</sup>

Although it is difficult to probe whether the purported link between Iraq's regime and terrorist groups was a genuine belief within the Bush administration, evidence suggests that it was not based on available intelligence, giving credence to the suspicion that the "administration manufactured the issue to exploit the national anguish over 9/11 [...] by associating Iraq with the perpetrators of that terrorist horror".<sup>895</sup> Compared to the issue of Saddam Hussein's WMD

---

<sup>891</sup> Isikoff and Corn, *Hubris: The Inside Story of Spin, Scandal, and the Selling of the Iraq War*, 412. See also Feith, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism*, 228.

<sup>892</sup> Haass, *War of Necessity, War of Choice: A Memoir of Two Iraq Wars*, 235.

<sup>893</sup> President Bush Outlines Iraqi Threat: Remarks by the President on Iraq", Cincinnati, Ohio, October 7, 2002, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2002/10/20021007-8.html>, accessed on May 23, 2013.

<sup>894</sup> "George W. Bush: Address Before a Joint Session of Congress on the State of the Union", *The American Presidency Project*, January 28, 2003, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29645>, accessed on May 23, 2013.

<sup>895</sup> Pillar, *Intelligence and U.S. Foreign Policy: Iraq, 9/11, and Misguided Reform*, 44. These associations were highly effective, as "[b]y August 2003 [...], more than two-thirds of Americans thought Saddam had been



program, the US intelligence community was far less convinced of any collaboration between Iraq and terrorists. "If there were evidence of Iraq giving funds or safe haven to al Qaeda before the invasion", Richard Clarke, the administration's chief counterterrorism specialist, argues, "the Administration would have produced it".<sup>896</sup> When Secretary of State Colin Powell prepared his speech to the UN security council in February 2003, he discarded a number of items linking Iraq to Al Qaeda, as such "assertions weren't backed by what the intelligence community believed and stood behind".<sup>897</sup> Indeed, evidence regarding the terrorist links of the Iraqi regime was so sparse that some of the most fervent supporters of regime change within the administration resorted to additional intelligence gathering, circumventing the intelligence community and trying to find proof for their unshaken belief in the Iraq-Al Qaeda connection.<sup>898</sup>

The second prevalent explanation for regime change in Iraq is an argument about the role of economic interests in the decision to overthrow Saddam Hussein. Especially the notion that Iraq's oil resources were a central factor in the Bush administration's rationale for regime change is a much-invoked variant of this argument. William Blum, for example, argues that the overthrow of Saddam Hussein enabled "American oil companies to move into Iraq to enjoy a *laissez-faire* feast".<sup>899</sup> Another author similarly argues that the "U.S. invasion of Iraq was not meant to stop Iraq from using weapons of mass destruction [...], nor was it to create democracy", but rather to "extend U.S. control over Iraqi oil supplies [...]" considered to be "the real spoils of war" and the "primary concerns governing the U.S. intervention from the start".<sup>900</sup> Further explicating the logic behind the alleged desire to control Iraqi oil, Noam Chomsky argues that "[i]f you control Iraq, you are in a very strong position to determine the price and production levels [of oil], and to throw your weight around throughout the world".<sup>901</sup>

---

involved in 9/11", see *ibid.*, 45. Richard Clarke suspects that "many of the heroic U.S. troops who risked their lives fighting in Iraq thought [...] that they were avenging the 3,000 dead from September 11", see Richard A. Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror* (New York: Free Press, 2004), 268.

<sup>896</sup> Clarke, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror*, 270.

<sup>897</sup> Colin Powell and Tony Koltz, *It Worked for Me: In Life and Leadership* (New York: Harper Collins, 2012), 220.

<sup>898</sup> Within the Department of Defense, Douglas Feith set up counter-terrorism evaluation group and then later the office of special plans, tasked to find evidence for a possible nexus between Iraq and Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations, see Packer, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq*, 105-108.

<sup>899</sup> William Blum, *Killing Hope: US Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* (London: Zed Books, 2003), 391.

<sup>900</sup> John B. Foster, *Naked Imperialism: The U.S. Pursuit of Global Dominance* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2006), 141.

<sup>901</sup> Noam Chomsky and David Barsamian, *Imperial Ambitions: Conversations on the Post-9/11 World* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 2005), 6.

Oil and infrastructure companies were certainly beneficiaries of the post-war occupation of Iraq. Corporations such as Halliburton, but also construction companies like Bechtel, won remarkable government contracts worth billions of dollars to reconstruct the Iraqi infrastructure and economy.<sup>902</sup> It is also true that some Bush administration officials like the President himself and his Vice President had "once been in the oil business", heading some of the companies that won government contracts in Iraq.<sup>903</sup> Despite these facts, however, it is hard to sustain that oil-related considerations governed the administration's decision to invade Iraq. A significant bulk of primary documents like the records of the administration's energy task force remain classified, but preliminary evidence suggests that the administration was not driven by a desire to control Iraqi oil. The oil and energy working group of the State Department's 'Future of Iraq Project', "one of the most comprehensive U.S. government planning efforts for raising [Iraq] out of the ashes of combat",<sup>904</sup> assured that "Iraq's enormous reserves of oil and gas are the endowment, patrimony, and birthright of the Iraqi people" and that the "focus of oil policy [...] should be to derive the maximum obtainable benefits from Iraq's enormous hydrocarbon reserves and deliver these benefits to their owners, the Iraqi people".<sup>905</sup> The project might have found little resonance with other government agencies, and "much of the project's work was shelved", having little impact on the implementation of post-war reconstruction in Iraq,<sup>906</sup> but its basic idea regarding the usefulness of Iraqi oil for Iraq's development was widely shared: while largely ignoring the State Department's project, Donald Rumsfeld and his Department of Defense planned on facilitating "Iraqi efforts to secure their own country, using their oil exports to finance whatever was needed".<sup>907</sup> Another indication for the lack of US interest in controlling Iraqi oil was the fact that, much to the surprise of Noam Chomsky, one of the most vocal proponents of the oil-argument,<sup>908</sup> the country's oil exports plummeted after the invasion, for years not

---

<sup>902</sup> "Halliburton's Iraq Role Expands", *BBC News*, May 7, 2003; "The Struggle for Iraq: Reconstruction, Bechtel Wins Its Second Big Contract For Iraq", *New York Times*, January 7, 2004.

<sup>903</sup> Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, 291.

<sup>904</sup> "New State Department Releases on the 'Future of Iraq' Project", *National Security Archive, Electronic Briefing Book No. 198*, <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB198/#4>.

<sup>905</sup> "The Future of Iraq Project: Oil and Energy Working Group", February, 25, 2003, <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB198/FOI%20Oil.pdf>

<sup>906</sup> "The Struggle for Iraq: Planning, State Dept. Study Foresaw Trouble Now Plaguing Iraq", *New York Times*, October 19, 2003.

<sup>907</sup> Gordon and Trainor, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, 168.

<sup>908</sup> Having expected to see a US occupation controlling and exploiting Iraqi oil, Chomsky argued in September 2003 that "[t]he occupation of Iraq has been an astonishing failure", see Chomsky and Barsamian, *Imperial Ambitions: Conversations on the Post-9/11 World*, 47.

regaining "even the reduced production levels that prevailed in the 1990s, when Iraq was under tough U.N. sanctions".<sup>909</sup>

The third alternative explanation prevalent in the literature treats the influence of the neoconservative movement, defined as an "especially hawkish political ideology",<sup>910</sup> on the government's decision-making process as the central factor responsible for the Bush administration's endorsement regime change in Iraq. Most commonly, this explanation assigns causal weight to neoconservatives who

seized the occasion of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, to steer the nation into a war that would never have been fought had not this group of ideologues managed somehow to gain control of national policy.<sup>911</sup>

John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt identify key administration officials who belonged to the neoconservative movement, "the principal driving force behind the Bush administration's decision to invade Iraq in 2003".<sup>912</sup>

this group included prominent officials in the Bush administration such as Paul Wolfowitz and Douglas Feith, the number two and three civilians in the Pentagon; Richard Perle, Kenneth Adelman, and James Woolsey, members of the influential Defense Policy Board; Scooter Libby, the vice president's chief of staff; John Bolton, undersecretary of state for arms control and international security, and his special assistant, David Wurmser; and Elliott Abrams, who is in charge of Middle East policy at the National Security Council. It also included a handful of well-known journalists like Robert Kagan, Charles Krauthammer, William Kristol, and William Safire.<sup>913</sup>

According to the argument, without the influence of these individuals on the US President, regime change in Iraq would hardly been possible.<sup>914</sup>

Indeed, neoconservative members of the Bush administration were staunch supporters of regime change in Iraq. Individuals such as Paul Wolfowitz or Scooter Libby propagated Saddam Hussein's overthrow enthusiastically, even before 9/11, evidenced by both public and private remarks about the utility of support for Iraqi opposition groups and the use of force to

---

<sup>909</sup> "Iraq Oil Output Lowest Since Invasion", *Washington Post*, April 28, 2006.

<sup>910</sup> Mearsheimer and Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 129.

<sup>911</sup> Kagan, "Neocon Nation - Neoconservatism, c. 1776."

<sup>912</sup> Mearsheimer and Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 17. Note that to Mearsheimer and Walt, the neoconservatives were a subgroup of the Israel lobby, "a loose coalition of individuals and groups that seek to influence American foreign policy in ways that will benefit Israel", see *ibid.*, viii.

<sup>913</sup> *Ibid.*, 239.

<sup>914</sup> For similar arguments about the importance of neoconservative influence on President Bush's decision-making, see Halper and Clarke, *America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order*, Fred Kaplan, *Daydream Believers: How a Few Grand Ideas Wrecked American Power* (Hoboken: John Wiley, 2008), Mann, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet*, John Prados, *Hoodwinked: The Documents That Reveal How Bush Sold Us a War* (New York: New Press, 2004).

unseat the Iraqi dictator.<sup>915</sup> Yet, explanations centering on neoconservatives both inside and outside the administration vastly overestimate the influence of these individuals on the decision-making process, particularly Bush's post-9/11 endorsement of military aggression against Saddam Hussein. Interestingly, Mearsheimer and Walt concede that, prior to 9/11, neoconservatives "had been unable to persuade either Clinton or Bush to support an invasion",<sup>916</sup> and by resorting to the central role 9/11 played in creating a new context and influencing Bush's outlook and perception of Saddam Hussein, inadvertently point to other factors unrelated to the existence and influence of neoconservatives that had an important bearing on Bush's decision to invade Iraq. As Frank Harvey shows through his counterfactual analysis, a US government headed by a different President and without neoconservative officials might have reached similar conclusions in the aftermath of 9/11.<sup>917</sup> The existence of neoconservatives in the Bush administration was thus not necessary for the US government to turn to regime change in Iraq as the chosen policy.

## Conclusion

US regime change in Iraq cannot be understood if we do not take the emotional state of administration officials, most notably of George W. Bush himself, into account. The Bush Doctrine's hegemonic vision, dividing the world into good and evil and promising to not only target terrorists, but also their alleged state sponsors and safe havens, combined with a radically negative perception of the sources of Iraqi obstruction led to high emotional frustration within the Bush administration. Saddam Hussein's continued intransigence after 9/11 in terms of his resistance against the enforcement of no-fly zones and continued ambiguity regarding his WMD program were viewed by the administration as a clear sign of the Iraqi leader's hostility towards and irreducible hatred for the United States, prompting Bush to resort to regime change to get rid of the perceived menace.

---

<sup>915</sup> Perhaps the fiercest supporter of regime change in Iraq, Paul Wolfowitz started campaigning for his ideas within the administration from the very moment he came into office in January 2001. According to George Packer, he "made the case for war with more passion and eloquence than anyone else in the administration", see Packer, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq*, 115.

<sup>916</sup> Mearsheimer and Walt, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy*, 246.

<sup>917</sup> Harvey, *Explaining the Iraq War: Counterfactual Theory, Logic and Evidence*.

## CONCLUSION

There is something deeply puzzling about regime change decisions. In the words of Stephen Kinzer, the story of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, for example, is a story "enveloped in a single one-word question: Why?".<sup>918</sup> Enshrouded in ambiguity, regime change in Iraq has been explained with recourse to ad-hoc assertions about the influence of neoconservatives. But Iraq is no exception. If regime change is generally costly, highly consequential, yet mostly ineffective, as studies have argued, its use raises questions. In trying to provide answers, most of existing explanations suffer from what has been called the "streetlight effect".<sup>919</sup> Taking certain patterns of state behavior for granted, particularly rationality based on cost-benefit calculations and the relevance of a quest for security, they have not been able to solve the enigma of regime change, as they have looked for answers under the proverbial streetlight, searching "for something in a way that's relatively convenient rather than in a way that's more likely to be fruitful".<sup>920</sup> In contrast, this study, chartering unexplored territory, has abandoned the streetlight and instead ventured into the dark to provide a more compelling explanation for the practice of regime change. In doing so, I have argued that regime change is better understood as an affectively spurred response to policymakers' experience of emotional frustration, an emotional state evoked by a combination of hegemonic expectations and perceptions of a target state's obstruction as rooted in irredeemable hatred.

The relationship between the experience of frustration and the inclination towards aggression has been subject to extensive study in the field of social psychology, but has not crossed disciplinary boundaries. The frustration-aggression hypothesis, postulating that engagement in aggressive behavior can be a consequence of frustration, is not only well-known in the field, but has received approval despite many modifications, and is still assumed to be "a major, if not the major, source of aggression".<sup>921</sup> Therefore, one would not exaggerate in claiming that the connection between frustration and aggression is anything but controversial at the level of individuals. When transposed to the level of international politics, however, the relationship seemingly loses its plausibility, running against the grain of much of international relations scholarship. After all, critics might note, especially at the level of the articulation and implementation of foreign policy, the emotional state of foreign

---

<sup>918</sup> Kinzer, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq*, 285.

<sup>919</sup> David H. Freedman, *Wrong: Why Experts Keep Failing Us and How to Know When Not to Trust Them* (New York: Little, Brown, 2010), 28.

<sup>920</sup> Ibid.

<sup>921</sup> Averill, *Anger and Aggression: An Essay on Emotion*, 128.

policymakers cannot be a consequential factor given that the highly institutionalized context of decision-making leaves little room for raw emotions to become influential movers of policy. Indeed, a substantial part of international relations theorizing is biased against not only the role of emotion in decision-making, asserting that at best "emotion is all consequence and rarely a cause",<sup>922</sup> but also against explanations that do not "place great stress on the incentives and constraints posed by the environment, be it domestic or international".<sup>923</sup> Judged from such a perspective, an argument about the role of emotional frustration in regime change decisions must look odd.

Despite such understandable pessimism towards an explanation for regime change centering on the impact of emotion on decision-making, this study has argued that it would in fact be difficult to account for the practice of regime change without reference to the emotional frustration of policymakers. Stripped to its essence, the core claim presented in this study is that regime change, being an aggressive foreign policy option that can be affectively spurred by emotional arousal, becomes an attractive tool for emotionally frustrated policymakers. What evokes emotional frustration on the part of policymakers is a combination of hegemonic expectations towards a target state and the perception that obstructive behavior is rooted in deep hatred. Once emotionally frustrated, these elites resort to regime change a) to get rid of a perceivedly irredeemable menace, and b) to discharge their frustration through the use of force. Portrayed in this way, regime change need not be the product of a rational weighing of costs and benefits, nor a tool whose essential purpose is to confront national security threats, spread democracy, or advance economic interests, i.e. factors prominently cited in the literature.

That the argument about the role of emotional frustration in regime change decisions helps us understand the pattern of US regime change is shown in the empirical part of this study. Through a series of four detailed historical case studies that reach back to the beginning of the twentieth century and encompass virtually the entire period of US regime change activity in the modern history of US foreign policy, I uncover the repeated ways in which the emotional frustration of leading US policymakers has framed and animated decisions to engage in regime change. As the first case study shows, the 1906 intervention in Cuba was Theodore Roosevelt's immediate response to the emotional frustration he experienced with the Cuban leadership around Cuban President Tomas Estrada Palma whose inability to quell a domestic uprising, the 1906 August revolt, was highly obstructive to

---

<sup>922</sup> Mercer, "Human Nature and the First Image: Emotion in International Politics," 290.

<sup>923</sup> Robert Jervis, "Do Leaders Matter and How Would We Know?," *Security Studies* 22, no. 2 (2013): 154.

Roosevelt's hegemonic expectations of order and stability in Cuba. Regarding the revolt as illegitimately targeted at the United States, and accusing Palma of being obstructive so as to intentionally drag the United States into the Cuban power struggle, Roosevelt responded violently by intervening in Cuba against both the rebels and the incumbent Cuban government. A few years later, President William H. Taft experienced similar levels of emotional frustration: confronted with the obstructive foreign policy and domestic economic policies of Jose Santos Zelaya, the President of Nicaragua, Taft decided to first suspend diplomatic recognition and then side with armed Nicaraguan opponents of Zelaya's presidential successor, Jose Madriz. Based on expectations towards Zelaya that were more extensive than during Roosevelt's presidential term, and the perception that Zelaya's and even Madriz' behavior were an expression of deep-seated anti-Americanism, Taft saw no choice but to use force to eliminate what he called 'Zelayist elements' from Nicaragua's political authority structure.

In the case of the 1965 Dominican intervention, President Johnson's decision to prevent Dominican constitutionalists from returning to their pre-coup political system was predicated upon his frustration with Juan Bosch, Dominican President before his ousting in September 1963. While Bosch proved to be an obstinate head of state regularly clashing with US expectations with regard to the Alliance for Progress and the persecution of Dominican Communists, it was his activities in exile that were perceived to be a sign of his hatred for everything American, provoking intense frustration in Johnson. Confronted with the possibility of Bosch's return to power, Johnson forcefully supported reactionary anti-Bosch elements within the Dominican military with the deployment of more than 20,000 US troops to the island, suppressing the Dominican constitutionalists' desire to return to their democratic 1963 constitution. Finally, the 2003 invasion of Iraq was similarly predicated upon George W. Bush's change in expectations towards Iraq after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, combined with a radically negative perception of the sources of Iraqi obstruction. While Saddam Hussein's foreign policy conduct had been obstructive at least since the beginning of the 1990s, only after 9/11 was it perceived to be an expression of his irreducible hatred for the United States. Intensely frustrated with the Iraqi dictator, Bush regarded regime change as a welcome tool to discharge his emotional arousal and to get rid of an unyielding menace.

This argument about emotional frustration and regime change in US foreign policy has significant implications for several important debates in international relations scholarship: the debate regarding the relationship between public statements, official justifications, and rhetoric with actual state practices; the debate on US grand strategy; the

debate on the effectiveness of regime change; and finally debate on how policymakers assess state intentions. In what follows, I consider each of these debates in turn.

### **Words, Deeds, and the Naiveté of Realism**

An important debate in international relations scholarship has revolved around whether official justifications for foreign policy actions bear any analytical and real-world significance. According to one line of argument, the justificatory choices of policymakers are important. Claiming that they provide a window onto the international normative context, justifications for state action are conceived of as attempts "to connect one's actions with standards of justice or [...] with standards of appropriate and acceptable behavior".<sup>924</sup> For states, it is important to link foreign policy actions to established principles of state conduct, because justifications constitute "legitimacy claims", which are "essential to the cultivation and maintenance of an actor's or institution's legitimacy". Thus, "actors seeking to justify their identities, interests, practices, or institutional designs" do so because they hope to receive consent and approval.<sup>925</sup> According to a second line of argument, however, the significance of justifications should not be overrated, because "public speech acts are notorious for their lack of credibility and validity as indicators for the actor's beliefs and intentions".<sup>926</sup> Little can be inferred from what state leaders publicly say, as leaders oftentimes spread outright lies.<sup>927</sup> Put differently, words are unreliable and talk cheap.<sup>928</sup> Especially realists point to a gap between rhetoric and actual foreign policy practice, arguing that, in the United States for example, "public discourse about foreign policy [...] is usually couched in the language of liberalism", while "[b]ehind closed doors [...], the elites who make national security policy speak mostly the language of power".<sup>929</sup> Indeed, asserting that their theoretical framework allows them to cut through fleeting rhetoric and to identify interests as they really are, many realists regularly accuse other theoretical perspectives of giving too much credit to costless communication, and of taking public statements at face value. This is evidenced, for example, by Stephen Walt's critique of Samuel Huntington's argument about the role of civilizational fault lines in the occurrence of international conflict in the post-Cold

---

<sup>924</sup> Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, 15.

<sup>925</sup> Christian Reus-Smit, "International Crises of Legitimacy," *International Politics* 44, no. 2-3 (2007): 159.

<sup>926</sup> Frank Schimmelfennig, *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe: Rules and Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 227.

<sup>927</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, *Why Leaders Lie: The Truth About Lying in International Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>928</sup> John J. Mearsheimer, "Conversations in International Relations: Interview with John J. Mearsheimer (Part I)," *International Relations* 20, no. 1 (2006): 123.

<sup>929</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 25.



War world.<sup>930</sup> Refuting Huntington's thesis, Walt claims that national security interests trump cultural affinities between states, asserting that inconsequential nature of public talk serves as a confirmation for the "enduring relevance of the realist, statist paradigm".<sup>931</sup> Another example is John Mearsheimer's claim that liberal theories, and the American public for that matter, buy too much into the public rhetoric of US foreign policy elites, being naively persuaded that the United States acts "according to cherished principles, rather than cold and calculated power considerations".<sup>932</sup>

This study contributes to the debate on the significance of public justifications for foreign policy actions. While its empirical findings support the basic notion that there is a discernible gap between rhetoric and practice, the study takes issue with the assertion that especially realist theories are well-equipped to identify the real forces that drive state behavior. Showing that instead of cutting through the rhetoric of foreign policy elites, realist approaches are prone to buying into official justifications that revolve around notions of national self-defense and thereby giving too much weight to security talk, the study shows that realism is guilty of the same basic mistake they accuse other theoretical explanations of committing. The analysis presented here demonstrates that especially in the cases of the Dominican Republic and Iraq, US administrations expended considerable efforts on the public presentation of their case for intervention.<sup>933</sup> While other lines of justifications have certainly played a role, justifications for regime change have in all cases asserted that action is necessary because US security is on the line. Yet, as the empirical analysis of this study illustrates, security considerations played a central role at the level of justifications, but decisions to intervene were crucially animated by emotional frustration, opening up a gap between talk and action that those who take the language of security and national threats at face value, misread. To the extent that US administrations have tried to justify regime change with recourse to security, they have inadvertently revealed the powerful incentives to present decisions in the language of security and self-defense, pointing to the imperative of justification and the "shared values and expectations that other decision makers and other publics in other states hold".<sup>934</sup> Assuming that such rhetoric reflects the actual forces driving

---

<sup>930</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

<sup>931</sup> Stephen M. Walt, "Building Up New Bogeymen," *Foreign Policy* 106, no. 1 (1997): 188.

<sup>932</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 27.

<sup>933</sup> In the case of the Dominican Republic, this is best summarized by Abraham Lowenthal: "deciding what to say about events in Santo Domingo became almost as important as, and perhaps more controversial than, deciding what actions to take", see Lowenthal, *The Dominican Intervention*, 104.

<sup>934</sup> Finnemore, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force*, 15.

policy, however, would be a naive leap of faith that interferes with the realist promise to uncover the sources of foreign policy conduct in general and regime change decisions in particular.

### **US Grand Strategy and the Consequence of Hegemonic Expectations**

International relations scholars have long debated which course US foreign policy should take. With consensus remaining elusive, the debate on US grand strategy, defined as a "nation-state's theory about how to produce security for itself",<sup>935</sup> has divided theorists into two competing camps.<sup>936</sup> The first camp favors a grand strategy of primacy, also called "deep engagement", arguing that the US should remain globally engaged and maintain its "security commitments to partners and allies in Europe, East Asia, and the Middle East".<sup>937</sup> Unless such expansive grand strategy is pursued, the United States would have to deal with "the emergence of a far more dangerous global security environment" in which undeterred states would aspire to regional hegemony and have incentives to "adopt solutions to their security problems that threaten others and thus stoke security dilemmas".<sup>938</sup> As high as the costs of US security commitments might be, the grand strategy of "deep engagement" is said to yield greater security benefits and should therefore be preferred over alternative grand strategies. The premise that global security commitments are necessary for US security is challenged by a second camp of scholars.<sup>939</sup> Arguing that the case for "deep engagement" is fundamentally flawed because "primacy is unlikely to produce [...] diminished third-party security competition", has "nonsecurity consequences", and has the "tendency to lead the United States into imprudent wars",<sup>940</sup> these scholars favor the alternative grand strategy of restraint, also called retrenchment. In the words of three of its proponents, "the policy of restraint [...]"

---

<sup>935</sup> Barry R. Posen, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2014), 1. Robert Art presents a definition that links the concept of grand strategy to the use of military power: "a grand strategy tells a nation's leaders what goals they should aim for and how best they can use their country's military power to attain these goals", see Robert J. Art, *A Grand Strategy for America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 1. Providing a broader definition that is not exclusively restricted to security, others define US grand strategy as encompassing "core interests in security, prosperity, and domestic liberty", see Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, "Don't Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment," *International Security* 37, no. 3 (2012): 11.

<sup>936</sup> Note that this dichotomy is the most basic distinction. One of the most influential pieces on the subject identifies four alternative US grand strategies, see Barry R. Posen and Andrew L. Ross, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security* 21, no. 3 (1996).

<sup>937</sup> Brooks, Ikenberry, and Wohlforth, "Don't Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment," 11.

<sup>938</sup> *Ibid.*, 33-34.

<sup>939</sup> See for example Eugene Gholz, Daryl G. Press, and Harvey M. Sapolsky, "Come Home, America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation," *International Security* 21, no. 4 (1997), Walt, "The Case for Finite Containment: Analyzing U.S. Grand Strategy."

<sup>940</sup> Campbell Craig et al., "Debating American Engagement: The Future of U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security* 38, no. 2 (2013): 184.

means specifically two things: a significant reduction in the number of active-duty forces and a significant reduction in America's overseas military presence".<sup>941</sup> The US can afford adopting a smaller role in the world, so the argument goes, as "security competition is declining anyway" and even "if competition occurred, it would pose little threat to the United States".<sup>942</sup>

As extensive as the debate on US grand strategy is, the empirical analysis of this study makes a novel contribution to it. Many advantages and disadvantages of specific grand strategic choices have been the subject of lengthy discussions, but it has been generally overlooked that hegemonic expectations might have unintended consequences that can incline foreign policymakers to the use of force where none would be considered, were non-hegemonic expectations adopted. As my historical analysis of US regime change decisions show, each case study under examination involved US leaders having expectations towards a target state that, if conformed to, would have curtailed or wholly undermined the target state leaders' autonomous decision-making capabilities. As a consequence, these hegemonic expectations increased the potential for frustration by turning the target states' otherwise ordinary state conduct into obstruction, which if perceived in a certain way, i.e. as rooted in hatred, arouses emotions that, as the study has shown, can lead to an aggressive foreign policy behavior like regime change. Proponents of the grand strategy of primacy (or "deep engagement") assure that their preferred strategy does not bias a state's foreign policy towards increased military activism, claiming that it does not "imply the aggressive use of force to overturn the international status quo or force U.S. preferences on other societies". In their view, "[t]he use of military power is a choice" and "[h]aving a large global military presence enables this choice but does not necessitate it".<sup>943</sup> If the empirical results of this study are valid, however, hegemonic expectations inherent in a grand strategy based on primacy and the concomitant maintenance of military bases worldwide, might inadvertently drag such a grand strategy into violent conflict, biasing the choice that "deep engagement" allegedly facilitates. Neither critics nor proponents of "deep engagement" have noted that expectations shape how foreign policymakers see a target state's behavior and whether such behavior constitutes obstruction in their eyes, potentially developing a dynamic that results in emotional arousal and foreign policy aggression.

---

<sup>941</sup> Gholz, Press, and Sapolsky, "Come Home, America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation," 14.

<sup>942</sup> Craig et al., "Debating American Engagement: The Future of U.S. Grand Strategy," 184.

<sup>943</sup> Brooks, Ikenberry, and Wohlforth, "Don't Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment," 14.

## The Effectiveness of Regime Change

As shown in Chapter Two of this study, the bulk of previous scholarship on regime change, also called "foreign-imposed regime change" (FIRC), has dealt with the effectiveness of this foreign policy instrument, not its sources. Among the range of potential consequences examined are the effects of regime change on democratization, internal stability, civil war, regional peace, and interstate conflict. According to the general consensus, FIRC enhances the durability of interstate peace and lowers the likelihood of regional war,<sup>944</sup> but is an ineffective tool in producing favorable results in the target state in terms of internal stability, civil war prevention, and democracy.<sup>945</sup> Stephen Krasner and Jeremy Weinstein, after reviewing studies on the domestic consequences of regime change for the target state, come to the conclusion that "the recent studies of the impact of FIRCs on democratization suggest that imposition creates consolidated democracies only if very specific conditions are in place".<sup>946</sup>

The effectiveness of regime change is not the main focus of this study. Yet, it contributes to the pertinent debate by showing that most of the potential consequences studied, particularly democracy promotion, are not always part of the reasons why the United States has engaged in regime change. Without inquiring into the role of regime change and the rationale of its use, the implicit assumption of most FIRC studies is that the desirable potential outcomes of FIRC reflect the regime changer's desires, as it would be rather unlikely to, for example, expect democratization through regime change if the regime changer has no interest in promoting democracy. Two scholars studying the effects of FIRC on democratization acknowledge that "[p]reconditions for democracy are important in creating fertile grounds for foreign-imposed regime change to bring about positive democratic change, but by themselves they cannot ensure democratization unless the external intervener takes the initiative and enacts democratic reforms".<sup>947</sup> By showing that, indeed, the desire to make the domestic complexion of target states more democratic has not been among the main driving forces for regime change in US intervention decisions, this study not only

---

<sup>944</sup> Enterline and Greig, "Beacons of Hope? The Impact of Imposed Democracy on Regional Peace, Democracy, and Prosperity.", Lo, Hashimoto, and Reiter, "Ensuring Peace: Foreign-Imposed Regime Change and Postwar Peace Duration, 1914–2001."

<sup>945</sup> Downes and Montan, "Forced to Be Free?: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization.", Enterline and Greig, "Perfect Storms? Political Instability in Imposed Polities and the Futures of Iraq and Afghanistan.", Peic and Reiter, "Foreign-Imposed Regime Change, State Power and Civil War Onset, 1920–2004."

<sup>946</sup> Stephen D. Krasner and Jeremy M. Weinstein, "Improving Governance from the Outside In," *Annual Review of Political Science* 17 (2014): 128–129.

<sup>947</sup> Downes and Montan, "Forced to Be Free?: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization," 106.

helps us understand why democratization has been such a rare outcome in target states suffering regime change, it also suggests that assessing the effectiveness of regime change makes only sense in light of the purpose of this policy instrument. Ironically then, one could argue that regime change is an highly effective instrument if its purpose, as this study suggests, is to get rid of an obstructive and perceivedly hateful foreign leader and to discharge emotional frustration, regardless of its lacking potential for democratization.

### **Perceived Intentions**

Can state leaders confidently gauge other states' intentions and if so, what indicators do they rely on to do so? Such questions have been at the center of an important debate in international relations scholarship that is essentially about the scrutability of state intentions. Pessimistic views argue that international anarchy is so pervasive that states can never be "sure that other states do not have offensive intentions to go along with their offensive capabilities".<sup>948</sup> This uncertainty prompts states to "make worst-case assumptions about their rivals' intentions" and therefore to focus on offensive capabilities of rivals.<sup>949</sup> In the words of Sebastian Rosato, because of uncertainty, "estimates of intentions play only a marginal role and great powers focus on the balance of power, which is more easily measurable".<sup>950</sup> Other views argue that it is not military capabilities states rely on to gauge intentions, but rather costly signals, which are defined as "an act which one type of actor in a game can take that other types would find too costly".<sup>951</sup> Costly signals help policymakers differentiate states with benign intentions, i.e. states that seek security, from states that have aggressive intentions beyond security.<sup>952</sup> Therefore, the pessimism of offensive realism about the ability of states to gauge one another's intentions is said to be unwarranted: pessimistic accounts "strongly overestimate the difficulty in assessing state motivations".<sup>953</sup> Finally, a recent study argues that neither military capabilities nor costly signals are indicators states resort to in order to assess their adversaries' intentions. Instead, state leaders "often base their interpretations [of intentions] on their own theories, expectations, and needs, sometimes ignoring costly signals and paying more attention to information that, though less costly, is

---

<sup>948</sup> Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*, 31.

<sup>949</sup> Ibid., 45.

<sup>950</sup> Sebastian Rosato, "The Inscrutable Intentions of Great Powers," *International Security* 39, no. 3 (2015): 88.

<sup>951</sup> Andrew Kydd, "Sheep in Sheep's Clothing: Why Security Seekers Do Not Fight Each Other," *Security Studies* 7, no. 1 (1997): 141.

<sup>952</sup> For costly signals with respect to arms control, unilateral defense, and unilateral restraint, see Charles L. Glaser, "Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help," *International Security* 19, no. 3 (1994): 68-70.

<sup>953</sup> Kydd, "Sheep in Sheep's Clothing: Why Security Seekers Do Not Fight Each Other," 128.

more vivid".<sup>954</sup> What Keren Yarhi-Milo calls the 'selective attention thesis' acknowledges "heuristic inference strategies" used by state leaders to get a grasp of their security environment and is therefore more flexible than competing explanations for how policymakers come to grips with other states' intentions.

My analysis of how US leaders perceive obstructive actions of target states contributes to the debate about the perception of state intentions in two important ways: first, by offering empirical evidence for how state leaders scrutinize the behavior of other states,<sup>955</sup> this study lends credence to the view that one and the same behavior can be perceived differently and that state leaders can draw varying inferences with regard to the roots of said behavior.<sup>956</sup> This implies that "decisionmakers do not always assume the worst about intentions, as offensive realists would say they should".<sup>957</sup> More specifically, this study shows that the perception of another state's behavior is crucially influenced by the extent to which policymakers impute malignity and hatred to the target state's actions. In all four cases of US regime change analyzed here, the decision to intervene was predicated upon US presidents associating target state obstruction with deep-seated hatred for the United States. Dovetailing with what authors have called the 'egocentric bias', i.e. the "predilection of people to see themselves as the central point of reference for the actions of others",<sup>958</sup> my findings call attention to how assumptions of hatred have a major impact on the perception of state intentions. Second, this study affirms the policy relevance of the study of perceptions of state intentions by showing how perceptions of obstruction can have serious emotional implications, even leading to decisions as fateful as regime change. If my account of US regime change decisions is correct, imputing hatred to a target state's behavior is likely to instigate an aggressive policy response. This carries with it an important policy implication, supporting views that call for a careful analysis of adversaries' sources of behavior that

---

<sup>954</sup> Keren Yarhi-Milo, "In the Eye of the Beholder: How Leaders and Intelligence Communities Assess the Intentions of Adversaries," *International Security* 38, no. 1 (2013): 9.

<sup>955</sup> Note that intentions are not the same as actions. As Rosato correctly notes, intentions are "attitudes about actions", denoting plans to "perform specific actions or behave in particular ways". See Rosato, "The Inscrutable Intentions of Great Powers," 52.

<sup>956</sup> As Yarhi-Milo shows, state leaders can have differing perceptions about what an adversary's behavior signifies and about "the informative value of the information on hand", see Keren Yarhi-Milo, *Knowing the Adversary: Leaders, Intelligence, and Assessment of Intentions in International Relations: Leaders, Intelligence, and Assessment of Intentions in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 1.

<sup>957</sup> Yarhi-Milo, "In the Eye of the Beholder: How Leaders and Intelligence Communities Assess the Intentions of Adversaries," 49.

<sup>958</sup> Richard Ned Lebow and Janice Gross Stein, "Afghanistan, Carter, and Foreign Policy Change: The Limits of Cognitive Models," in *Diplomacy, Force, and Leadership: Essays in Honor of Alexander L. George*, ed. Dan Caldwell and Timothy J. McKeown (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 106.

acknowledges other states' agency rather than reducing their behavior to an allegedly direct response to one's own actions.

### **A Final Note on the Powerful**

By inquiring into the role of emotional frustration in US regime change decisions, this study has unavoidably had to zoom in on the powerful, the ones who make decisions that affect the lives of countless people around the world, and, with phenomena as big as regime change, decisions that determine nothing less than the difference between life and death for those affected. Taking these real costs of policies such as regime change seriously, it is of paramount importance to understand how and why such fateful decisions are made and, just as importantly, who the people are who make these decisions. One implicit, yet important implication of this study is to show that decisionmakers are no superhuman creatures capable of finding rational solutions, however defined. Rather, as exceptionally powerful and perhaps mystical as they might be, they are better portrayed as ordinary human beings with the same cognitive and emotional capacities, flaws, and predispositions as us less powerful. Understood in this way, it should perhaps be less surprising that, for better or worse, even foreign policy elites happen to act upon their emotional impulses, regardless of the highly institutionalized and bureaucratized context in which decisions regarding foreign policy are made. Showing that the behavioral implications of emotion reach to the highest echelons of power should give us a more realistic picture of foreign policy decision-making, and help us understand and grasp decisions as costly and fateful as regime change.





## Bibliography

- Alexander, Robert J., 1973, *Latin American Political Parties* (New York: Praeger).
- Allawi, Ali A., 2007, *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace* (New Haven: Yale University Press).
- Anderson, Donald F., 1973, *William Howard Taft: A Conservative's Conception of the Presidency* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- Aron, Raymond, 2003 [1966], *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers).
- Art, Robert J., 2003, *A Grand Strategy for America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- Ashley, Richard K., 1984, "The Poverty of Neorealism," *International Organization*, 38 (2), 225-286.
- Averill, James R., 1982, *Anger and Aggression: An Essay on Emotion* (New York: Springer).
- Baker, Peter, 2013, *Days of Fire: Bush and Cheney in the White House* (New York: Random House).
- Ball, George W., 1982, *The Past Has Another Pattern: Memoirs* (New York: Norton).
- Barkawi, Tarak, and Mark Laffey, 2002, "Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations," *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, 31 (1), 109-127.
- Barnet, Richard J., 1968, *Intervention and Revolution: The United States in the Third World* (London: Paladin).
- Beale, Howard K., 1956, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Rise of America to World Power* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press).
- Beede, Benjamin R., 2010, *The Small Wars of the United States, 1899–2009: An Annotated Bibliography* (New York: Routledge).
- Bennett, Andrew, and Colin Elman, 2006, "Qualitative Research: Recent Developments in Case Study Methods," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 9 (1), 455-476.
- Bennett, Andrew, and Colin Elman, 2007, "Case Study Methods in the International Relations Subfield," *Comparative Political Studies*, 40 (2), 170-195.
- Berkowitz, Leonard, 1978, "Whatever Happened to the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis?," *American Behavioral Scientist*, 21 (5), 691-708.
- Berkowitz, Leonard, 1989, "Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis: Examination and Reformulation," *Psychological Bulletin*, 106 (1), 59-73.
- Berkowitz, Leonard, 1993, *Aggression: Its Causes, Consequences, and Control* (New York: McGraw-Hill).
- Berkowitz, Leonard, and Eddie Harmon-Jones, 2004, "Toward an Understanding of the Determinants of Anger," *Emotion*, 4 (2), 107.
- Bermann, Karl, 1986, *Under the Big Stick: Nicaragua and the United States since 1848* (Boston: South End Press).
- Beschloss, Michael R., 2001, *Reaching for Glory: Lyndon Johnson's Secret White House Tapes, 1964-1965* (New York: Simon & Schuster).
- Beveridge, Albert, 1898. The March of the Flag, September 16. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1898beveridge.asp>. (accessed July 23, 2014).
- Bishop, Joseph B., 1919, *Theodore Roosevelt and His Time Shown in His Own Letters, Vol. 1* (New York: Scribner's).
- Bleiker, Roland, and Emma Hutchison, 2008, "Fear No More: Emotions and World Politics," *Review of International Studies*, 34 (I), 115.
- Blum, William, 2003, *Killing Hope: US Military and CIA Interventions Since World War II* (London: Zed Books).

- Boot, Max, 2002, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* (New York: Basic Books).
- Booth, John A., 1985, *The End And The Beginning: The Nicaraguan Revolution* (Boulder: Westview Press).
- Borger, Julian, and Richard Norton-Taylor, 2001, "Allies Hit Hard at Saddam's Air Defence Sites," *Guardian*, August 11,.
- Bosch, Juan, 1965, "Communism and Democracy in the Dominican Republic," *Saturday Review*, August 7, 13-15.
- Bosch, Juan, 1965, "A Tale of Two Nations," *New Leader*, 48 (13), 3-7.
- Bosch, Juan, 1965, *The Unfinished Experiment: Democracy in the Dominican Republic* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger).
- Bosch, Juan, 1968, *Pentagonism: A Substitute for Imperialism* (New York: Grove Press).
- Brands, H. W., 2006, "Presidential Doctrines: An Introduction," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 36 (1), 1-4.
- Brands, H.W., 1987, "Decisions on American Armed Intervention: Lebanon, Dominican Republic, and Grenada," *Political Science Quarterly*, 102 (4), 607-624.
- Brands, H.W., 1995, *The Wages of Globalism: Lyndon Johnson and the Limits of American Power* (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Britt, Steuart H., and Sidney Q. Janus, 1940, "Criteria of Frustration," *Psychological Review*, 47 (5), 451-470.
- Brooks, Stephen G., G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, 2012, "Don't Come Home, America: The Case against Retrenchment," *International Security*, 37 (3), 7-51.
- Brooks, Stephen G., and William C. Wohlforth, 2008, *World Out of Balance: International Relations and the Challenge of American Primacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Brune, Lester H., 2003, *Chronological History of U.S. Foreign Relations: 1607-1932, Vol. 1* (New York: Routledge).
- Buchanan, James, John Y. Mason, and Pierre Soule, 1854. Ostend Manifesto, October 15. <http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/havana/Ostend2.htm>. (accessed January 10, 2012).
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, and George. W. Downs, 2006, "Intervention and Democracy," *International Organization*, 60 (3), 627-649.
- Bukovansky, Mlada, Ian Clark, Robyn Eckersley, Richard Price, Christian Reus-Smit, and Nicholas .J. Wheeler, 2012, *Special Responsibilities: Global Problems and American Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Bull, Hedley, 2002 [1977], *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Burgos, Russell A., 2008, "Origins of Regime Change: "Ideapolitik" on the Long Road to Baghdad, 1993–2000," *Security Studies*, 17 (2), 221-256.
- Bush, George W., 1999. A Distinctly American Internationalism, November 19. <http://www.fas.org/news/usa/1999/11/991119-bush-foreignpolicy.htm>. (accessed April 10, 2014).
- Bush, George W., 1999. A Period of Consequences, September 23. [http://www3.citadel.edu/pao/addresses/pres\\_bush.html](http://www3.citadel.edu/pao/addresses/pres_bush.html). (accessed April 10, 2014).
- Bush, George W., 2000. The Second Gore-Bush Presidential Debate, October 11. <http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-11-2000-debate-transcript>. (accessed April 10, 2014).

- Bush, George W., 2000. The Third Gore-Bush Presidential Debate, October 17. <http://www.debates.org/index.php?page=october-17-2000-debate-transcript>. (accessed).
- Bush, George W., 2001. Address Before a Joint Session of the Congress on the United States Response to the Terrorist Attacks of September 11. *The American Presidency Project*, eds. Peters, Gerhard and John T. Woolley. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=64731&st=saddam&st1=iraq>. (accessed).
- Bush, George W., 2001. The President's News Conference with President Vicente Fox of Mexico in San Cristobal, Mexico, February 16. *The American Presidency Project*, eds. Peters, Gerhard and John T. Woolley. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=45868&st=&st1=>. (accessed April 14, 2014).
- Bush, George W., 2003. Address to the Nation on Iraq, March 17. *American Presidency Project*, eds. Peters, Gerhard and John T. Woolley. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=63713&st=iraq&st1=#>. (accessed May 2, 2013).
- Bush, George W., 2010, *Decision Points* (New York: Crown Publishers).
- "Bush Rejects Claims of Softened Iraq Policy ", 2001, *Washington Times*, March 10,.
- "Bush: We Will Get Rid of Saddam," 2002, *Guardian*, April 6,.
- Butler, Richard 2000, *The Greatest Threat: Iraq, Weapons of Mass Destruction, and the Crisis of Global Security* (New York: Public Affairs).
- Cannon, Walter B., 1927, "The James-Lange Theory of Emotions: A Critical Examination and an Alternative Theory," *American Journal of Psychology*, 39 (1/4), 106-124.
- Cardenal Tellería, Marco A., 2000, *Nicaragua y su Historia: Cronología del Acontecer Histórico y Construcción de la Nación Nicaragüense, Vol. I: 1502-1936* (Managua: Banco Mercantil).
- Center for Strategic Studies, 1966, *Dominican Action, 1965: Intervention or Cooperation?* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic Studies, Georgetown University).
- Cheney, Dick, and Liz Cheney, 2011, *In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir* (New York: Threshold Editions).
- Chester, Eric T., 2001, *Rag-Tags, Scum, Riff-Raff, and Commies: The U.S. Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1965-1966* (New York: Monthly Review Press).
- Chomsky, Noam, and David Barsamian, 2005, *Imperial Ambitions: Conversations on the Post-9/11 World* (London: Hamish Hamilton).
- Clark, Ian, 1989, *The Hierarchy of States: Reform and Resistance in the International Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Clarke, Richard A., 2004, *Against All Enemies: Inside America's War on Terror* (New York: Free Press).
- Cohen, Arthur R., 1955, "Social norms, Arbitrariness of Frustration, and Status of the Agent of Frustration in the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 51 (2), 222.
- Coletta, Paolo E., 1973, *The Presidency of William Howard Taft* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas).
- Collier, David, and James Mahoney, 1996, "Insights and Pitfalls: Selection Bias in Qualitative Research," *World Politics*, 49 (1), 56-91.
- Collier, David, James Mahoney, and Jason Seawright, 2004, "Claiming Too Much: Warnings about Selection Bias," in Collier, David and Henry E. Brady, eds., *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield), 85-102.

- Collin, Richard H., 1990, *Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean: The Panama Canal, the Monroe Doctrine, and the Latin American Context* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press).
- Committee, Senate Foreign Relations, 2001. Testimony at Budget Hearing, March 8. <http://2001-2009.state.gov/secretary/former/powell/remarks/2001/1164.htm>. (accessed April 9, 2014).
- Costigliola, Frank, 1998, "'Mixed Up' and 'Contact': Culture and Emotion among the Allies in the Second World War," *The International History Review*, 20 (4), 791-805.
- Costigliola, Frank, 2010, "The Foreign Policy of Kennedy and Johnson in the Cold War," in Westad, Odd Arne and Melvyn P. Leffler, eds., *Cambridge History of the Cold War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 112-133.
- Costigliola, Frank, 2012, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Cox, Michael, Timothy J. Lynch, and Nicolas Bouchet, 2012, *US Foreign Policy and Democracy Promotion: From Theodore Roosevelt to Barack Obama* (New York: Routledge).
- Craig, Campbell, Benjamin H. Friedman, Brendan Rittenhouse Green, Justin Logan, Stephen G. Brooks, G. John Ikenberry, and William C. Wohlforth, 2013, "Debating American Engagement: The Future of U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security*, 38 (2), 181-199.
- Cramer, Jane K., and A. Trevor Thrall, 2012, *Why Did the United States Invade Iraq?* (London: Routledge).
- Crandall, Russell, 2006, *Gunboat Democracy: U.S. Interventions in the Dominican Republic, Grenada, and Panama* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield).
- Crawford, Neta C, 2000, "The Passion of World Politics: Propositions on Emotion and Emotional Relationships," *International Security*, 24 (4), 116-156.
- Damasio, Antonio R., 1994, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (New York: Avon Books).
- Damasio, Antonio R., 2004, "Emotions and Feelings: A Neurological Perspective," in Manstead, Antony S.R., Nico Frijda and Agneta Fischer, eds., *Feelings and Emotions: The Amsterdam Symposium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 49-57.
- Dao, James, 2001, "Provocation Cited: Bush Approves Attacks Beyond 'No Fly' Zone - First in 2 Years," *New York Times*, February 17, 2.
- Dao, James, 2002, "U.S. Says Iraq Moved Missiles to No-Fly Zone," *New York Times*, April 23,.
- Denny, Harold N., 1929, *Dollars for Bullets: The Story of American Rule in Nicaragua* (New York: Dial Press).
- Dollard, John, Neal E. Miller, Leonard W. Doob, O.H. Mowrer, and Robert R. Sears, 1939, *Frustration and Aggression* (London: Butler & Tanner).
- Donnelly, Jack, 2012, "The Elements of the Structures of International Systems," *International Organization*, 66 (4), 609-643.
- Downes, Alexander B., 2008, "The Causes of Foreign-Imposed Regime Change in Interstate Wars," *Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*.
- Downes, Alexander B., and Jonathan Monten, 2013, "Forced to Be Free?: Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization," *International Security*, 37 (4), 90-131.
- Draper, Theodore, 1963, "Bosch and Communism," *New Leader*, 46, 9-14.
- Draper, Theodore, 1968, *The Dominican Revolt: A Case Study in American Policy* (New York: Commentary).

- Draper, Theodore, 1971, "The Dominican Intervention Reconsidered," *Political Science Quarterly*, 86 (1), 1-36.
- Dueck, Colin, 2001, "The Sources of American Expansion," *Security Studies*, 11 (1), 171-189.
- Dueck, Colin, 2009, "Neoclassical Realism and the National Interest: Presidents, Domestic Politics, and Major Military Interventions," in Lobell, Steven E. , Norrin M. Ripsman and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, eds., *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy* (New York: Cambridge University Press), 139-169.
- Dueck, Colin, 2010, *Hard Line: The Republican Party and U.S. Foreign Policy Since World War II* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Duelfer, Charles, 2009, *Hide and Seek: The Search for Truth in Iraq* (New York: Public Affairs).
- Duelfer, Charles A., and Stephen Benedict Dyson, 2011, "Chronic Misperception and International Conflict: The U.S.-Iraq Experience," *International Security*, 36 (1), 73-100.
- Eisenberg, Daniel, 2002, "We're Taking Him Out," *Time*, May 5,.
- Elliott, Michael, and James Carney, 2003, "First Stop, Iraq," *Time*, March 31,.
- Ellsworth, Phoebe C., and Craig A. Smith, 1988, "From Appraisal to Emotion: Differences Among Unpleasant Feelings," *Motivation and Emotion*, 12 (3), 271-302.
- Elster, Jon, 1989, *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Elster, Jon, 1999, *Alchemies of the Mind: Rationality and the Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Engel, Jeffrey A, 2008, "The Democratic Language of American Imperialism: Race, Order, and Theodore Roosevelt's Personifications of Foreign Policy Evil," *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 19 (4), 671-689.
- Enterline, Andrew J., and J. Michael Greig, 2005, "Beacons of Hope? The Impact of Imposed Democracy on Regional Peace, Democracy, and Prosperity," *Journal of Politics*, 67 (4), 1075-1098.
- Enterline, Andrew J., and J. Michael Greig, 2008, "Perfect Storms? Political Instability in Imposed Politics and the Futures of Iraq and Afghanistan," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 52 (6), 880-915.
- Fazal, Tanisha M., 2004, "State Death in the International System," *International Organization*, 58 (2), 311-344.
- Fazal, Tanisha M., 2007, *State Death: The Politics and Geography of Conquest, Occupation, and Annexation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Fearon, James D., 1995, "Rationalist Explanations for War," *International Organization*, 49 (3), 379-414.
- Feith, Douglas J., 2008, *War and Decision: Inside the Pentagon at the Dawn of the War on Terrorism* (New York: Harper Collins).
- Felten, Peter G., 1996, "The Path to Dissent: Johnson, Fulbright, and the 1965 Intervention in the Dominican Republic," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 26 (4), 1009-1018.
- Ferguson, Yale H., 1973, "The Dominican Intervention of 1965: Recent Interpretations," *International Organization*, 27 (4), 517-548.
- Feshbach, Seymour, 1964, "The Function of Aggression and the Regulation of Aggressive Drive," *Psychological Review*, 71 (4), 257.
- Fierke, Karin M., 2014, "Emotion and Intentionality," *International Theory*, 6 (3), 563-567.
- Findling, John E., "The United States and Zelaya: A Study in the Diplomacy of Expediency" (Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin, 1971).

- Finkel, Steven E., Anibal Perez-Linan, and Mitchell A. Seligson, 2007, "The Effects of US Foreign Assistance on Democracy Building, 1990-2003," *World Politics*, 59 (3), 404-439.
- Finnemore, Martha, 2003, *The Purpose of Intervention: Changing Beliefs About the Use of Force* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- Fleischer, Ari, 2002. George Bush: Press Briefing by Ari Fleischer, December 2. *American Presidency Project*, eds. Peters, Gerhard and John T. Woolley. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=47457>. (accessed May 29, 2013).
- Flibbert, Andrew, 2006, "The Road to Baghdad: Ideas and Intellectuals in Explanations of the Iraq War," *Security Studies*, 15 (2), 310-352.
- Foraker, Joseph B., 1916, *Notes of a Busy Life, Vol. 2* (Cincinnati: Steward & Kidd).
- Foster, John B., 2006, *Naked Imperialism: The U.S. Pursuit of Global Dominance* (New York: Monthly Review Press).
- Freedman, David H., 2010, *Wrong: Why Experts Keep Failing Us and How to Know When Not to Trust Them* (New York: Little, Brown).
- Frijda, Nico H., 1986, *The Emotions* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press).
- Frijda, Nico H., 2007, *The Laws of Emotion* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates).
- Geddes, Barbara, 1990, "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics," *Political Analysis*, 2 (1), 131-150.
- Geddes, Barbara, 1999, "What Do We Know About Democratization After Twenty Years?," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 2 (1), 115-144.
- George, Alexander L., 1969, "The 'Operational Code': A Neglected Approach to the Study of Political Leaders and Decision-Making," *International Studies Quarterly*, 13 (2), 190-222.
- George, Alexander L., 1979, "The Causal Nexus Between Cognitive Beliefs and Decision-Making Behavior: The 'Operational Code' Belief System," in Falkowski, Lawrence S., ed., *Psychological Models in International Politics* (Boulder: Westview Press), 95-124.
- George, Alexander L., and Andrew Bennett, 2005, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge: MIT Press).
- Gerring, John, 2004, "What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good for?," *American Political Science Review*, 98 (2), 341-354.
- Gerring, John, 2007, *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Gholz, Eugene, Daryl G. Press, and Harvey M. Sapolsky, 1997, "Come Home, America: The Strategy of Restraint in the Face of Temptation," *International Security*, 21 (4), 5-48.
- Gideon, Rose, 2000, "Democracy Promotion and American Foreign Policy: A Review Essay," *International Security*, 25 (3), 186-203.
- Gilady, Lilach, and Bruce Russett, 2002, "Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution," in Carlsnaes, Walter, Thomas Risse and Beth A. Simmons, eds., *Handbook of International Relations* (London: SAGE), 392-408.
- Gilpin, Robert, 1981, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Glaser, Charles L., 1994, "Realists as Optimists: Cooperation as Self-Help," *International Security*, 19 (3), 50-90.
- Gleijeses, Piero, 1978, *The Dominican Crisis: The 1965 Constitutionalist Revolt and American Intervention* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press).
- Goertz, Gary, 2006, *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

- Goff, Fred, and Michael Locker, 1969, "The Violence of Domination: U.S. Power and the Dominican Republic," in Horowitz, Irving Louis, Jose De Castro and John Gerassi, eds., *Latin American Radicalism: A Documentary Report on Left and Nationalist Movements* (New York: Random House), 249-291.
- Gordon, Michael R., 2001, "A Decade Beyond the Gulf War: New Bush, Old Team, Ponder the Saddam Hussein Problem " *New York Times* February 18, 10.
- Gordon, Michael R., and Bernard E. Trainor, 2006, *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq* (New York: Pantheon).
- Gould, Lewis L., 2001, *America in the Progressive Era, 1890-1914* (New York: Routledge).
- Grieco, Joseph M., 1988, "Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation: A Realist Critique of the Newest Liberal Institutionalism," *International Organization*, 42 (3), 485-507.
- Grow, Michael, 2008, *U.S. Presidents and Latin American Interventions: Pursuing Regime Change in the Cold War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas).
- Haass, Richard N., 2003, "Wars of Choice," *Washington Post*, November 23, Editorial; B07.
- Haass, Richard N., 2009, *War of Necessity, War of Choice: A Memoir of Two Iraq Wars* (New York: Simon & Schuster).
- Hague, Rod, and Martin Harrop, 2004, *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Hall, Michael R., 2000, *Sugar and Power in the Dominican Republic: Eisenhower, Kennedy, and the Trujillos* (Westport: Greenwood Press).
- Hall, Todd H., 2011, "We Will Not Swallow This Bitter Fruit: Theorizing a Diplomacy of Anger," *Security Studies*, 20 (4), 521-555.
- Halliday, Fred, 2010, *Caamaño in London: The Exile of a Latin American Revolutionary* (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas, University of London, School of Advanced Study).
- Halper, Stefan A., and Jonathan Clarke, 2004, *America Alone: The Neo-Conservatives and the Global Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Hannigan, Robert E., 2002, *The New World Power: American Foreign Policy, 1898-1917* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press).
- Hansen, L., 2006, *Security as Practice: Discourse Analysis and the Bosnian War* (London: Routledge).
- Hardin, Russell, 1995, *One for All: The Logic of Group Conflict* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Harrison, Benjamin, 1995, "The United States and the 1909 Nicaragua Revolution," *Caribbean Quarterly*, 41 (3/4), 45-63.
- Harrison, Benjamin T., 1995, "Theodore Roosevelt and Nicaragua," *Business History Studies*, 2, 63-86.
- Hartlyn, Jonathan, 1998, *The Struggle for Democratic Politics in the Dominican Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press).
- Harvey, Frank P., 2012, *Explaining the Iraq War: Counterfactual Theory, Logic and Evidence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Healy, David, 1988, *Drive to Hegemony: The United States in the Caribbean, 1898-1917* (London: University of Wisconsin Press).
- Hempel, Carl G., 1942, "The Function of General Laws in History," *Journal of Philosophy*, 39 (2), 35-48.
- Herring, George C., 2008, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations Since 1776* (Oxford: Oxford University Press).
- Herz, John H., 1950, "Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, 2 (2), 157-180.
- Hill, Howard C., 1927, *Roosevelt and the Caribbean* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

- Hirsh, Michael, 2002, "Bush and the World," *Foreign Affairs*, 18-43.
- Hirshleifer, Jack, 1993, "The Affections and the Passions: Their Economic Logic," *Rationality and Society*, 5 (2), 185-202.
- Hoffmann, Stanley, 1984, "The Problem of Intervention," in Bull, Hedley, ed., *Intervention in World Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), 7-28.
- Holmes, James R., 2006, *Theodore Roosevelt and World Order: Police Power in International Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Potomac Books).
- House, Freedom, 2012. Freedom in the World: Iraq. <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2012/iraq#.U1SHBleKJBk>. (accessed).
- Huntington, Samuel P., 1996, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster).
- Huntington Wilson, Francis M., 1916, "The Relation of Government to Foreign Investment," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 68 (Nov.), 298-311.
- Huntington Wilson, Francis M., 1945, *Memoirs of an Ex-Diplomat* (Boston: Bruce Humphries).
- Iber, Patrick J., 2013, "'Who Will Impose Democracy?': Sacha Volman and the Contradictions of CIA Support for the Anticommunist Left in Latin America," *Diplomatic History*, 37 (5), 995-1028.
- Ikenberry, G. John, 2000, "America's Liberal Grand Strategy: Democracy and National Security in the Post-War Era," in Cox, Michael, G. John Ikenberry and Takashi Inoguchi, eds., *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 103-126.
- Isikoff, Michael, and David Corn, 2006, *Hubris: The Inside Story of Spin, Scandal, and the Selling of the Iraq War* (New York: Crown).
- James, William, 1884, "What is an Emotion?," *Mind*, 9 (34), 188-205.
- Janis, Irving L., 1982, *Groupthink* (Boston: Wadsworth).
- Jefferson, Thomas, 1823. Thomas Jefferson on the Monroe Doctrine. [http://history-world.org/thomas\\_jefferson\\_on\\_the\\_monroe\\_d.htm](http://history-world.org/thomas_jefferson_on_the_monroe_d.htm). (accessed July 23, 2014).
- Jentleson, Bruce W., 2010, *American Foreign Policy: The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company).
- Jentleson, Bruce W., and Ariel E. Levite, 1992, "The Analysis of Protracted Foreign Military Intervention," in Levite, Ariel E., Bruce W. Jentleson and Larry Berman, eds., *Foreign Military Intervention: The Dynamics of Protracted Conflict* (New York: Columbia University Press), 1-22.
- Jervis, Robert, 1976, *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Jervis, Robert, 1997, *System Effects: Complexity in Political and Social Life* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Jervis, Robert, 2003, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine," *Political Science Quarterly*, 118 (3), 365-388.
- Jervis, Robert, 2013, "Do Leaders Matter and How Would We Know?," *Security Studies*, 22 (2), 153-179.
- Jessup, Philip C., 1938, *Elihu Root: 1845-1909, Vol. 1* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company).
- Johnson, Lyndon B., 1971, *The Vantage Point: Perspectives of the Presidency, 1963-1969* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston).
- Kagan, Robert, 2008, "Neocon Nation - Neoconservatism, c. 1776," *World Affairs*, 170 (4), 13.
- Kagan, Robert, 2014, "Superpowers Don't Get to Retire," *New Republic*, May 26.



- Kaplan, Fred, 2008, *Daydream Believers: How a Few Grand Ideas Wrecked American Power* (Hoboken: John Wiley).
- Karabell, Zachary, 1995, "Backfire: US Policy Toward Iraq, 1988-2 August 1990," *Middle East Journal*, 49 (1), 28-47.
- Kaufmann, Chaim, 2004, "Threat Inflation and the Failure of the Marketplace of Ideas: The Selling of the Iraq War," *International Security*, 29 (1), 5-48.
- Keene, Edward, 2013, "International Hierarchy and the Origins of the Modern Practice of Intervention," *Review of International Studies*, 39 (5), 1077-1090.
- Keith, LeeAnna Yarbrough, "The Imperial Mind and United States Intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1961--1966" (Ph.D., The University of Connecticut, 1999).
- Kelso, Quinten A., "The Dominican Crisis of 1965: A New Appraisal " (Ph.D., University of Colorado at Boulder, 1982).
- Kennan, George F., 1947, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," 25 (4), 566-582.
- Kennan, George F., 2012 [1951], *American Diplomacy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
- Kennedy, John F., 1961. Address at a White House Reception for Members of Congress and for the Diplomatic Corps of the Latin American Republics, March 13. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=8531&st=&st1=>. (accessed September 7).
- Kennedy, John F., 1962. Annual Message to the Congress on the State of the Union, January 11. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=9082>. (accessed September 11).
- Kerevel, Yann, 2006, "Re-Examining the Politics of US Intervention in Early 20th Century Nicaragua: José Madriz and the Conservative Restoration," *Research Paper Series No. 43* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico ).
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba, 1994, *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Kinzer, Stephen, 2006, *Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* (New York: Times Books).
- Krahe, Barbara, 2013, *The Social Psychology of Aggression* (New York: Psychology Press).
- Krasner, Stephen D., 1982, "Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables," *International Organization*, 36 (2), 185-205.
- Krasner, Stephen D., 1999, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Krasner, Stephen D., 2011, "Changing State Structures: Outside In," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 108 (4), 21302-21307.
- Krasner, Stephen D., and Jeremy M. Weinstein, 2014, "Improving Governance from the Outside In," *Annual Review of Political Science*, 17, 123-145.
- Krauthammer, Charles, 2001, "Wars of Choice, Wars of Necessity," *Time*, October 28.
- Krieglmeyer, Regina, Doris Wittstadt, and Fritz Strack, 2009, "How Attribution Influences Aggression: Answers to An Old Question by Using an Implicit Measure of Anger," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 45 (2), 379-385.
- Krisch, Nico, 2003, "More Equal than the Rest? Hierarchy, Equality and US Predominance in International Law," in Byers, Michael and George Nolte, eds., *United States Hegemony and the Foundations of International Law* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press), 135-175.
- Kulik, James A., and Roger Brown, 1979, "Frustration, Attribution of Blame, and Aggression," *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 15 (2), 183-194.
- Kurzman, Dan, 1965, *Santo Domingo: Revolt of the Damned* (New York: Van Rees).

- Kydd, Andrew, 1997, "Sheep in Sheep's Clothing: Why Security Seekers Do Not Fight Each Other," *Security Studies*, 7 (1), 114-155.
- LaFeber, Walter, 1963, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- LaFeber, Walter, 1993, *Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America* (New York: W.W. Norton).
- LaFeber, Walter, 1999, "The Tension Between Democracy and Capitalism During the American Century," *Diplomatic History*, 23 (2), 263-284.
- Lake, David A., 2009, *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- Lake, David A., 2011, "Two Cheers for Bargaining Theory: Assessing Rationalist Explanations of the Iraq War," *International Security*, 35 (3), 7-52.
- Langley, Lester D., 2002, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934* (Wilmington: SR Books).
- Lansford, Tom, 2005, *Theodore Roosevelt in Perspective* (New York: Novinka Books).
- Larson, Deborah Welch, 1994, "The Role of Belief Systems and Schemas in Foreign Policy Decision-Making," *Political Psychology*, 15 (1), 17-33.
- Lazarus, Richard S., 1982, "Thoughts on the Relations Between Emotion and Cognition," *American Psychologist*, 37 (9), 1019-1024.
- Lazarus, Richard S., 1984, "On the Primacy of Cognition," *American Psychologist*, 39 (2), 124-129.
- Lebow, Richard Ned, 2010, *Why Nations Fight: Past and Future Motives for War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Lebow, Richard Ned, and Janice Gross Stein, 1993, "Afghanistan, Carter, and Foreign Policy Change: The Limits of Cognitive Models," in Caldwell, Dan and Timothy J. McKeown, eds., *Diplomacy, Force, and Leadership: Essays in Honor of Alexander L. George* (Boulder: Westview Press).
- Leffler, Melvyn P., 2013, "The Foreign Policies of the George W. Bush Administration: Memoirs, History, Legacy," *Diplomatic History*, 37 (2), 190-216.
- Leites, Nathan, 1951, *The Operational Code of the Politburo* (New York: McGraw-Hill).
- LeoGrande, William M, 1986, "Rollback or Containment?: The United States, Nicaragua, and the Search for Peace in Central America," *International Security*, 11 (2), 89-120.
- Leonard, Thomas M., 1991, *Central America and the United States: The Search for Stability* (Athens: University of Georgia Press).
- Levy, Jack S., 1983, "Misperception and the Causes of War: Theoretical Linkages and Analytical Problems," *World Politics*, 36 (1), 76-99.
- Levy, Jack S., 2002, "Qualitative Methods in International Relations," in Brecher, Michael and Frank P. Harvey, eds., *Millennial Reflections on International Studies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press), 432-454.
- Levy, Jack S., 2008, "Case Studies: Types, Designs, and Logics of Inference," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 25 (1), 1-18.
- Leys, Ruth, 2011, "The Turn to Affect: A Critique," *Critical Inquiry*, 37 (3), 434-472.
- Litwak, Robert S., 2007, *Regime Change: U.S. Strategy Through the Prism of 9/11* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press).
- Litwak, Robert S., 2012, *Outlier States: American Strategies to Change, Contain, or Engage Regimes* (Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press).
- Lo, Nigel, Barry Hashimoto, and Dan Reiter, 2008, "Ensuring Peace: Foreign-Imposed Regime Change and Postwar Peace Duration, 1914-2001," *International Organization*, 62 (4), 717-736.

- Lockmiller, David A., 1938, *Magoon in Cuba: A History of the Second Intervention, 1906-1909* (New York: Greenwood Press).
- Loveman, Brian, 2010, *No Higher Law: American Foreign Policy and the Western Hemisphere since 1776* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press).
- Lowenthal, Abraham F., 1970, "The United States and the Dominican Republic to 1965: Background to Intervention," *Caribbean Studies*, 10 (2), 30-55.
- Lowenthal, Abraham F., 1972, *The Dominican Intervention* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).
- Lustick, Ian S., 1996, "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias," *American Political Science Review*, 90 (3), 605-618.
- Mahoney, James, 2001, *The Legacies of Liberalism: Path Dependence and Political Regimes in Central America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press).
- Mann, James, 2004, *Rise of the Vulcans: The History of Bush's War Cabinet* (New York: Viking).
- Marcus, George E., 2003, "The Psychology of Emotion and Politics," in Sears, David O., Leonie Huddy and Robert Jervis, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Political Psychology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 182-221.
- Martin, John B., 1966, *Overtaken by Events: The Dominican Crisis from the Fall of Trujillo to the Civil War* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday).
- McCullough, David, 1977, *The Path Between the Seas: The Creation of the Panama Canal, 1870-1914* (New York: Simon & Schuster).
- McDermott, Rose, 2004, "The Feeling of Rationality: The Meaning of Neuroscientific Advances for Political Science," *Perspectives on Politics*, 2 (4), 691-706.
- McNeese, Tim, 2001, *The U.S. Presidency* (St. Louis: Milliken Publishing Company).
- McPherson, Alan, 2003, "Misled by Himself: What the Johnson Tapes Reveal About the Dominican intervention of 1965," *Latin American Research Review*, 38 (2), 127-146.
- McPherson, Alan, 2012, "Latin America," in Lerner, Mitchell B., ed., *A Companion to Lyndon B. Johnson* (West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell), 387-405.
- Mearsheimer, John J., 2001, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton).
- Mearsheimer, John J., 2006, "Conversations in International Relations: Interview with John J. Mearsheimer (Part I)," *International Relations*, 20 (1), 105-123.
- Mearsheimer, John J., 2011, *Why Leaders Lie: The Truth About Lying in International Politics* (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Mearsheimer, John J., and Stephen M. Walt, 2007, *The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux).
- Meernik, James, 1996, "United States Military Intervention and the Promotion of Democracy," *Journal of Peace Research*, 33 (4), 391-402.
- Mercer, Jonathan, 1996, *Reputation and International Politics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- Mercer, Jonathan, 2005, "Rationality and Psychology in International Politics," *International Organization*, 59 (1), 77-106.
- Mercer, Jonathan, 2006, "Human Nature and the First Image: Emotion in International Politics," *Journal of International Relations and Development*, 9 (3), 288-303.
- Mercer, Jonathan, 2010, "Emotional Beliefs," *International Organization*, 64 (01), 1-31.
- Miller Center, American President: A Reference Resource. <http://millercenter.org/president/taft/essays/biography/1>. (accessed August 15).
- Miller, Neal E., 1941, "The Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis," *Psychological Review*, 48 (4), 337-342.

- Millett, Allan R., 1968, *The Politics of Intervention: The Military Occupation of Cuba, 1906-1909* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press).
- Mitchell, David, and Tansa George Massoud, 2009, "Anatomy of Failure: Bush's Decision-Making Process and the Iraq War," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 5 (3), 265-286.
- Monroe, James, 1823. Seventh Annual Message, December 2. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29465#axzz1j4SQGvZY>. (accessed July 23, 2014).
- Morgenthau, Hans J., 1962 [1948], *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Knopf).
- Morgenthau, Hans J., 2005 [1948], *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (Boston: McGraw-Hill).
- Morgenthau, Hans J. , 1966, "To Intervene or Not to Intervene," *Foreign Affairs*, 45, 425-436.
- Morison, Elting E., 1952, *The Letters of Theodore Roosevelt: The Big Stick, 1907-1909* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).
- "Mr. Bush's Foreign Policy," 1999, *New York Times*, November 20.
- Mulhollan, Paige E., 1971, "Transcript, George Ball Oral History Interview II, LBJ Library," July 9.
- Mullenbach, Mark J., and Gerard P. Matthews, 2008, "Deciding to Intervene: An Analysis of International and Domestic Influences on United States Interventions in Intrastate Disputes," *International Interactions*, 34 (1), 25-52.
- Munro, Dana G., 1918, *The Five Republics of Central America: Their Political and Economic Development and Their Relations with the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Munro, Dana G., 1958, "Dollar Diplomacy in Nicaragua, 1909-1913," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 38 (2), 209-234.
- Munro, Dana G., 1964, *Intervention and Dollar Diplomacy in the Caribbean, 1900-1921* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Musicant, Ivan, 1990, *The Banana Wars: A History of United States Military Intervention in Latin America from the Spanish-American War to the Invasion of Panama* (New York: Macmillan).
- Nearing, Scott, and Joseph Freeman, 1925, *Dollar Diplomacy: A Study in American Imperialism* (New York: B.W. Huebsch and the Viking Press).
- Nexon, Daniel H., and Thomas Wright, 2007, "What's at Stake in the American Empire Debate," *American Political Science Review*, 101 (02), 253-271.
- Ninkovich, Frank, 1986, "Roosevelt, Theodore: Civilization as Ideology," *Diplomatic History*, 10 (3), 221-245.
- Norton-Taylor, Richard, 2002, "Britain and US Step up Bombing in Iraq," *Guardian*, December 4, 17.
- "Not to Recognize Madriz," 1909, *New York Times*, December 31.
- Nussbaum, Martha C., 2001, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Osgood, Robert E. , 1953, *Ideals and Self-Interest in America's Foreign Relations* (Chicago: Chicago University Press).
- Owen, John M., 2002, "The Foreign Imposition of Domestic Institutions," *International Organization*, 56 (2), 375-+.
- Owen, John M., 2010, *The Clash of Ideas in World Politics: Transnational Networks, States, and Regime Change, 1510-2010* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Packer, George, 2005, *The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux).

- Pastore, Nicholas, 1952, "The Role of Arbitrariness in the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis," *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 47 (3), 728-731.
- Paterson, Thomas G., J.Garry Clifford, Shane J. Maddock, Deborah Kisatsky, and Kenneth J. Hagan, 2009, *American Foreign Relations: A History to 1920, Vol. 1* (Boston: Wadsworth).
- Peceny, Mark, 1999, *Democracy at the Point of Bayonets* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press).
- Pei, Minxin, and Sara Kasper, *Lessons from the Past: The American Record on Nation Building*, 2003 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace).
- Peic, Goran, and Dan Reiter, 2011, "Foreign-Imposed Regime Change, State Power and Civil War Onset, 1920-2004," *British Journal of Political Science*, 41 (3), 453-475.
- Pelz, Stephen, 2001, "Toward a New Diplomatic History: Two and a Half Cheers for International Relations Methods," in Elman, Colin and Miriam F. Elman, eds., *Bridges and Boundaries: Historians, Political Scientists, and the Study of International Relations* (Cambridge: MIT Press), 85-110.
- Pérez, Louis A., 1986, *Cuba Under the Platt Amendment, 1902-1934* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press).
- Pérez, Louis A., 1997, "Cuba," in Jentleson, Bruce W. and Thomas G. Paterson, eds., *Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Relations, Vol. 1* (New York: Oxford University Press), 376-387.
- Pérez, Louis A., 1998, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press).
- Perlez, Jane, 2001, "Allies Bomb Iraqi Air Defenses in Biggest Attack in 6 Months," *New York Times*, August 11,.
- Perlo, Victor, 1965, *Marines in Santo Domingo!* (New York: New Outlook).
- Petras, James, 1966, "Dominican Republic: Revolution and Restoration," *New Left Review*, 40, 76-84.
- Pillar, Paul R., 2011, *Intelligence and U.S. Foreign Policy: Iraq, 9/11, and Misguided Reform* (New York: Columbia University Press).
- "Poison Gas: Iraq's Crime," 1988, *New York Times*, March 26.
- Policy, Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), 2002. Sovereignty and Anticipatory Self-Defense, August 24. <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/294/2002-08-24%20From%20OSD%20Policy%20re%20Sovereignty%20and%20Anticipatory%20Self-Defense.pdf>. (accessed April 15, 2014).
- Pollack, Kenneth, 2002, *The Threatening Storm: The Case for Invading Iraq* (New York: Random House).
- Pollack, Kenneth, 2008, *A Path Out of the Desert: A Grand Strategy for America in the Middle East* (New York: Random House).
- Posen, Barry, 1984, *The Sources of Military Doctrine: France, Britain, and Germany Between the World Wars* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- Posen, Barry R., 2014, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- Posen, Barry R., and Andrew L. Ross, 1996, "Competing Visions for U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security*, 21 (3), 5-53.
- Powell, Anna I., 1928, "Relations between the United States and Nicaragua, 1898-1916," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 8 (1), 43-64.
- Powell, Colin, and Tony Koltz, 2012, *It Worked for Me: In Life and Leadership* (New York: Harper Collins).
- Prados, John, 2004, *Hoodwinked: The Documents That Reveal How Bush Sold Us a War* (New York: New Press).

- Puente, Faustino Guerra, 1906, "Causes of the Cuban Insurrection," *The North American Review*, 183 (599), 538-540.
- Purdum, Todd 2003, *A Time of Our Choosing: America's War in Iraq* (New York: Times Books).
- Rabe, Stephen G., 1988, *Eisenhower and Latin America: The Foreign Policy of Anticommunism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press).
- Rabe, Stephen G., 1996, "The Caribbean Triangle: Betancourt, Castro, and Trujillo and U.S. Foreign Policy, 1958–1963," *Diplomatic History*, 20 (1), 55-78.
- Rabe, Stephen G., 1999, *The Most Dangerous Area in the World: John F. Kennedy Confronts Communist Revolution in Latin America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press).
- Rabe, Stephen G., 2006, "The Johnson Doctrine," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 36 (1), 48-58.
- Rabe, Stephen G., 2011, *The Killing Zone: The United States Wages Cold War in Latin America* (New York: Oxford University Press).
- Reisman, W. Michael, 2004, "The Manley O. Hudson Lecture: Why Regime Change Is (Almost Always) a Bad Idea," *American Journal of International Law*, 98 (3), 516-525.
- Reiter, Dan, 2003, "Exploring the Bargaining Model of War," *Perspective on Politics*, 1 (1), 27-43.
- Representatives, House of, 2002. Hearing Before the Committee on Armed Services: United States Policy Toward Iraq, September 18. [http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/security/has261000.000/has261000\\_of.htm](http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/security/has261000.000/has261000_of.htm). (accessed April 9, 2014).
- Republican Party, 1904. Republican Party Platform of 1904. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=29631>. (accessed July 20, 2014).
- Reus-Smit, Christian, 2007, "International Crises of Legitimacy," *International Politics*, 44 (2-3), 157-174.
- Reus-Smit, Christian, 2011, "Struggles for Individual Rights and the Expansion of the International System," *International Organization*, 65 (2), 207-242.
- Reus-Smit, Christian, 2013, "The Concept of Intervention," *Review of International Studies*, 39 (5), 1057-1076.
- Ricard, Serge, 2006, "The Roosevelt Corollary," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 36 (1), 17-26.
- Rice, Condoleezza, 2000, "Promoting the National Interest," *Foreign Affairs*, 79 (1), 45-+.
- Rice, Condoleezza, 2011, *No Higher Honor: A Memoir of My Years in Washington* (New York: Crown Publishers).
- Ricks, Thomas E., 2006, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (London: Penguin).
- Rohlfing, Ingo, 2012, *Case Studies and Causal Inference: An Integrative Framework* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).
- Roosevelt, Franklin D., 1928, "Our Foreign Policy: A Democratic View," *Foreign Affairs*, 6 (4), 573-586.
- Roosevelt, Franklin D., 1933. Address Before the Woodrow Wilson Foundation, December 28. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=14593>. (accessed September 4).
- Roosevelt, Franklin D., 1933. Inaugural Address, March 4. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=14473>. (accessed September 4).
- Roosevelt, Theodore, 1904. Fourth Annual Message, December 4. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29545#axzz1j47rZkHC>. (accessed July 14, 2014).

- Roosevelt, Theodore, 1905. Inaugural Address, March 4. <http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3564>. (accessed July 13, 2014).
- Roosevelt, Theodore, 1914, *An Autobiography* (New York: Macmillan).
- Roosevelt, Theodore, and Henry C. Lodge, 1925, *Selections from the Correspondence of Theodore Roosevelt and Henry Cabot Lodge, 1884-1918, Vol. 2* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons).
- Roper, Jon, 2013, "John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson," in Cox, Michael, Timothy J. Lynch and Nicolas Bouchet, eds., *US Foreign Policy and Democracy Promotion* (London: Routledge), 102-120.
- Rosato, Sebastian, 2015, "The Inscrutable Intentions of Great Powers," *International Security*, 39 (3), 48-88.
- Rosen, Stephen P., 2005, *War and Human Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Rosenau, James N., 1968, "The Concept of Intervention," *Journal of International Affairs*, 22 (2), 165-176.
- Rosenzweig, Saul, 1934, "Types of Reaction to Frustration," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 29 (3), 298-300.
- Ross, Andrew A.G., 2006, "Coming in from the Cold: Constructivism and Emotions," *European Journal of International Relations*, 12 (2), 197-222.
- Rostow, Walt W., 1991, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Rove, Karl, 2010, *Courage and Consequence: My Life as a Conservative in the Fight* (New York: Simon & Schuster).
- Rule, Brendan G., and Andrew R. Nesdale, 1976, "Emotional Arousal and Aggressive Behavior," *Psychological Bulletin*, 83 (5), 851.
- Rumsfeld, Donald, 2001. Rumsfeld to Rice et al.: Iraq, July 27. <http://library.rumsfeld.com/doclib/sp/293/2001-07-27%20To%20Condoleezza%20Rice%20re%20Iraq.pdf>. (accessed April 13, 2014).
- Rumsfeld, Donald, 2011, *Known and Unknown: A Memoir* (New York: Sentinel).
- Salisbury, Richard V., 1997, "Great Britain, the United States, and the 1909-1910 Nicaraguan Crisis," *The Americas*, 379-394.
- Salmon, Wesley C., 1973 [1963], *Logic* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall).
- Sammon, Bill, 2001, "Cheney Softens Demand for Iraqi Inspections: Baghdad weapons program no longer held 'crucial'," *Washington Times*, March 5,.
- Sartori, Giovanni, 1970, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review*, 64 (4), 1033-1053.
- Sartori, Giovanni, 1991, "Comparing and Miscomparing," *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 3 (3), 243-257.
- Saunders, Elizabeth N., 2009, "Transformative Choices: Leaders and the Origins of Intervention Strategy," *International Security*, 34 (2), 119-161.
- Saunders, Elizabeth N., 2011, *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- Saurette, Paul, 2006, "You Dissin Me? Humiliation and Post 9/11 Global Politics," *Review of International Studies*, 32 (3), 495-522.
- Schachter, Stanley, 1964, "The Interaction of Cognitive and Physiological Determinants of Emotional State," in Berkowitz, Leonard, ed., *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* (New York: Academic Press), 49-80.
- Schafer, Mark, Sam Robison, and Bradley Aldrich, 2006, "Operational Codes and the 1916 Easter Rising in Ireland: A Test of the Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis," *Foreign Policy Analysis*, 2 (1), 63-82.

- Scherer, Klaus R. , 1994, "Toward a Concept of 'Modal Emotions'," in Ekman, Paul and Richard J. Davidson, eds., *The Nature of Emotion: Fundamental Questions* (New York: Oxford University Press), 25-31.
- Schimmelfennig, Frank, 2003, *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe: Rules and Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Schmitt, Eric, 1999, "A Cadre of Familiar Foreign Policy Experts Is Putting Its Imprint on Bush," *New York Times*, December 23,, 1.
- Schmitz, David F., 1999, *Thank God They're On Our Side: The United States and Right-Wing Dictatorships, 1921-1965* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press).
- Scholes, Walter, 1961, "Philander C. Knox," in Graebner, Norman A., ed., *An Uncertain Tradition: American Secretaries of State in the Twentieth Century* (New York: McGraw-Hill), 59-78.
- Schoultz, Lars, 1998, *Beneath the United States: A History of U. S. Policy Toward Latin America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).
- Scott, James B., 1928, "Elihu Root," in Bemis, Samuel F., ed., *The American Secretaries of State and Their Diplomacy, Vol. 9* (New York: Alfred Knopf), 193-282.
- Sexton, Jay, 2011, *The Monroe Doctrine: Empire and Nation in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Hill and Wang).
- Shapiro, Samuel, 1965, "The Dominican Dilemma," *New Politics*, 5 (2), 59-69.
- Simpson, Gerry, 2004, *Great Powers and Outlaw States: Unequal Sovereigns in the International Legal Order* (Cambridge Cambridge University Press).
- Slater, Jerome, 1965, "Democracy versus Stability: The Recent Latin American Policy of the United States," *Yale Review*, 55 (2), 169-181.
- Slater, Jerome, 1970, *Intervention and Negotiation: The United States and the Dominican Revolution* (New York: Harper & Row).
- Smith, Craig A., and Phoebe C. Ellsworth, 1985, "Patterns of Cognitive Appraisal in Emotion," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 48 (4), 813-838.
- Smith, Tony, 1994, *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Smith, Tony, 2000, "National Security Liberalism and American Foreign Policy," in Cox, Michael, G. John Ikenberry and Takashi Inoguchi, eds., *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 85-102.
- Smith, Tony, 2011, "From Woodrow Wilson in 1902 to the Bush Doctrine in 2002: Democracy Promotion as Imperialism " *International Politics*, 48 (2-3), 229-250.
- Solarz, Stephen J., and Paul Wolfowitz, 1999, "Letters to the Editor: How to Overthrow Saddam," *Foreign Affairs*, 78 (2), 160-163.
- State, U.S. Department of, 2003. Deputy Secretary Wolfowitz Interview with Sam Tannenhaus, Vanity Fair, May 9. <http://www.defense.gov/transcripts/transcript.aspx?transcriptid=2594>. (accessed May 15, 2014).
- Stein, Arthur A., 1982, "When Misperception Matters," *World Politics*, 34 (4), 505-526.
- Stuart, Graham H. , 1922, *Latin America and the United States* (New York: Century ).
- Suganami, Hidemi, 2002, "Explaining War: Some Critical Observations," *International Relations*, 16 (3), 307-326.
- Suskind, Ron, 2004, *The Price of Loyalty: George W. Bush, the White House, and the Education of Paul O'Neill* (New York: Simon & Schuster).
- Szulc, Tad, 1959, *Twilight of the Tyrants* (New York: Holt).
- Taffet, Jeffrey F., 2007, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy: The Alliance for Progress in Latin America* (New York: Routledge).



- Taft, William H., 1905, "The Administration of Criminal Law," *The Yale Law Journal*, 15 (1), 1-17.
- Taft, William H., 1909. First Annual Message, December 7. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29550&st=&st1=>. (accessed August 8, 2014).
- Taft, William H., 1912. Fourth Annual Message, December 3. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29553>. (accessed August 15,).
- Taft, William H., and Robert Bacon, 1906, *Cuban Pacification: Report of William H. Taft, Secretary of War, and Robert Bacon, Assistant Secretary of State* (Washington: Government Printing Office).
- Tanter, Raymond, and Manus Midlarsky, 1967, "A Theory of Revolution," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 264-280.
- Tatalovich, Raymond, Travis Cook, and Scott Yenor, 2000, "The Constitutional Presidency: Conservative Scholarship and Energy in the Executive," in Henderson, Phillip G., ed., *The Presidency Then and Now* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield), 95-114.
- Teller, Henry M., 1898. Teller Amendment: Congress Joint Resolution, April 20. <http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/teller.htm>. (accessed January 10, 2012).
- Tenet, George, 2007, *At the Center of the Storm: My Years at the CIA* (New York: Harper Collins).
- Teplitz, Benjamin I., "The Political and Economic Foundations of Modernization in Nicaragua: The Administration of Jose Santos Zelaya, 1893-1909" (Ph.D., Howard University, 1973).
- Text of the Platt Amendment, 1901. <http://www.historyofcuba.com/history/platt.htm>. (accessed January 10, 2012).
- Thies, Cameron G., 2002, "A Pragmatic Guide to Qualitative Historical Analysis in the Study of International Relations," *International Studies Perspectives*, 3 (4), 351-372.
- Thomas, Hugh, 1971, *Cuba: Or the Pursuit of Freedom* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode).
- Thucydides, 1934, *The Complete Writings of Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War* (New York: The Modern Library).
- Tomz, Michael, 2007, *Reputation and International Cooperation: Sovereign Debt Across Three Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Trachtenberg, Marc, 2006, *The Craft of International History: A Guide to Method* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Tulchin, Joseph S., 1994, "Promise of Progress: U.S. Relations with Latin America During the Administration of Lyndon B. Johnson," in Cohen, Warren I. and Nancy B. Tucker, eds., *Lyndon Johnson Confronts the World: American Foreign Policy, 1963-1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 211-243.
- U.S. Interest in an Interoceanic Canal 1835-1881. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/panama-canal-us.htm>. (accessed August 9, 2014).
- "The United States and Nicaragua," 1909, *The Times*, December 13.
- "The United States and Nicaragua: President Zelaya's Reply to Mr. Knox," 1909, *The Times*, December 6.
- "The United States and Nicaragua: The Government's Attitude," 1909, *The Times*, December 3.
- US Independence. <http://www.cubahistory.org/en/british-occupation-and-us-independence/us-independence.html>. (accessed July 23, 2014).
- Veesser, Cyrus, 2003, "Inventing Dollar Diplomacy: The Gilded-Age Origins of the Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine," *Diplomatic History*, 27 (3), 301-326.

- Veesser, Cyrus, 2013, "The Platt Amendment and U.S. Occupation Policies in Latin America," in Frentzos, Christos and Antonio S. Thompson, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of American and Diplomatic History* (New York: Routledge), 53-62.
- Vertzberger, Yaacov, 1990, *The World in Their Minds: Information Processing, Cognition, and Perception in Foreign Policy Decisionmaking* (Stanford: Stanford University Press).
- Vincent, R.J., 1974, *Nonintervention and International Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- von Tunzelmann, Alex, 2011, *Red Heat: Conspiracy, Murder and the Cold War in the Caribbean* (New York: Henry Holt).
- Walt, Stephen M., 1987, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- Walt, Stephen M., 1989, "The Case for Finite Containment: Analyzing U.S. Grand Strategy," *International Security*, 14 (1), 5-49.
- Walt, Stephen M., 1996, *Revolution and War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press).
- Walt, Stephen M., 1997, "Building Up New Bogeysmen," *Foreign Policy*, 106 (1), 176-189.
- Waltz, Kenneth N., 1979, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley).
- Walzer, Michael, 2006, "Regime Change and Just War," *Dissent*, 53 (3), 103-108.
- Weitzel, George T., 1927, "The United States and Central America. Policy of Clay and Knox," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 132 ( Jul.), 115-126.
- Wendt, Alexander, 1999, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Werner, Suzanne, 1996, "Absolute and Limited War: The Possibility of Foreign-Imposed Regime Change," *International Interactions*, 22 (1), 67-88.
- Wertheim, Stephen, 2009, "Reluctant Liberator: Theodore Roosevelt's Philosophy of Self-Government and Preparation for Philippine Independence," *Presidential Studies Quarterly*, 39 (3), 494-518.
- Westad, Odd Arne, 2005, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Wiarda, Howard J., and Michael J. Kryzanek, 1992, *The Dominican Republic: A Caribbean Crucible* (Boulder: Westview Press).
- Widenor, William C., 1980, *Henry Cabot Lodge and the Search for an American Foreign Policy* (Berkeley: University of California Press).
- Williams, Talcott, 1906, "The Causes of Cuban Insurrection," *The Outlook*, 84 (3), 111-114.
- Williams, William A., 1972, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* (New York: W.W. Norton).
- Wolf, Reinhard, 2011, "Respect and Disrespect in International Politics: The Significance of Status Recognition," *International Theory*, 3 (1), 105-142.
- Wolfers, Arnold, 1962, *Discord and Collaboration: Essays on International Politics* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press).
- Wood, Bryce, 1961, *The Making of the Good Neighbor Policy* (New York: Columbia University Press).
- Wood, Bryce, 1985, *The Dismantling of the Good Neighbor Policy* (Austin: University of Texas Press).
- Woods, Kevin M., David D. Palkki, and Mark E. Stout, 2011, *The Saddam Tapes: The Inner Workings of a Tyrant's Regime, 1978-2001* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
- Woods, Randall B., 2008, "Conflicted Hegemon: LBJ and the Dominican Republic," *Diplomatic History*, 32 (5), 749-766.
- Woodward, Bob, 2002, *Bush at War* (New York: Simon & Schuster).

- Woodward, Bob, 2004, *Plan of Attack* (New York: Simon & Schuster).
- Worchel, Stephen, 1974, "The Effect of Three Types of Arbitrary Thwarting on the Instigation to Aggression," *Journal of Personality*, 42 (2), 300-318.
- Yarhi-Milo, Keren, 2013, "In the Eye of the Beholder: How Leaders and Intelligence Communities Assess the Intentions of Adversaries," *International Security*, 38 (1), 7-51.
- Yarhi-Milo, Keren, 2014, *Knowing the Adversary: Leaders, Intelligence, and Assessment of Intentions in International Relations: Leaders, Intelligence, and Assessment of Intentions in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- Young, Oran R. , 1968, "Intervention and International Systems," *Journal of International Affairs*, 22 (2), 177-187.
- Zahniser, Marvin R., and W. Michael Weis, 1989, "A Diplomatic Pearl Harbor? Richard Nixon's Goodwill Mission to Latin America in 1958," *Diplomatic History*, 13 (2), 163-190.
- Zakaria, Fareed, 1998, *From Wealth to Power: The Unusual Origins of America's World Role* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).
- "Zelaya Resigns, Denouncing US," 1909, *New York Times*, December 17.
- Zucchini, David 2004, *Thunder Run: The Armored Strike to Capture Baghdad* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press).